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ABSTRACT

This 1945 National Education Association yearbook focuses attention on the post-World War II problems of rural schools and encourages national, state, and local leaders to lay plans for strengthening rural education programs. The articles examine social and economic problems faced by rural Americans, the implications of these problems for rural schools, and some practical steps for improvement. Part 1 of the document presents goals for rural America, concerning rural work, living standards and services, and rural-urban relationships. Part 2 presents basic economic and social data, identifies major problems affecting rural education, and discusses establishment of standards for rural education and other services. Considering farm size, efficiency, and crop types as factors, agriculture can be made to earn a living for rural families. Education's role lies in placing the right farmer on the right farm. Other factors affecting rural education include rural incomes, taxation, and population trends. Part 3 discusses specific problems faced by rural schools, including curriculum, teacher recruitment, funding, organization, and administration. The goals of rural education involve guidance programs, health care, and vocational education. Standards of teacher competency should be understood as part of rural efforts to attract and hold good teachers. School administration needs should be assessed in the context of community size, school attendance, and system organization. Rural education also implies certain needs for student transportation, buildings and equipment, and community education activities. Federal and state funding is important as a means of equalizing educational opportunities for all rural students. (TES)

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RURAL SCHOOLS
FOR
TOMORROW

ED 329379

YEARBOOK

Department of Rural Education
National Education Association
of the United States

FEBRUARY 1945

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RURAL SCHOOLS
for
TOMORROW

SPONSORED BY THE COMMISSION ON
RURAL EDUCATION AND THE WAR
EDITED BY JULIAN E. BUTTERWORTH

Yearbook

THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL EDUCATION
National Education Association
of the United States
1201 SIXTEENTH STREET, NORTHWEST, WASHINGTON 6, D. C.

February 1945

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Yearbook of
The Department of Rural Education

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HISTORICAL NOTE

The Department of Rural Education of the National Education Association was organized at the Chicago meeting in February 1919. It was an outgrowth of the former Department of Rural and Agricultural Education, authorized by the Board of Directors in 1907. Its chief purpose is "to promote the general advancement of rural education thruout the United States." The Department meets twice a year, in February and in June, and welcomes all persons interested in rural education.

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FRANK W. CYR
Professor of Education
Teachers College
Columbia University
New York, N. Y.

CAROLINE EVINGSON
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COMMISSION ON RURAL EDUCATION AND THE WAR

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Iowa State College
Ames, Iowa

Julian E. Butterworth
Professor of Rural Education
(Educational Administration)
School of Education
Cornell University
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Lois M. Clark, Adviser
Early Childhood and Elementary Education
Department of Public Instruction
Harrisburg, Pa.

Frank W. Cyr
Professor of Education
Teachers College
Columbia University
New York, N. Y.

Howard A. Dawson
Director of Rural Service
National Education Association
Washington, D. C.

A. F. Elsea, Editor
Educational Publications
Edwards Press
Jefferson City, Mo.

Roy W. Roberts
Professor of Agricultural Education
University of Arkansas
Fayetteville, Ark.

William McKinley Robinson
Director, Department of Rural Life and Education
Western Michigan College of Education
Kalamazoo, Mich.

Department of Rural Education

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Early Childhood and Elementary Education
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Eligibility—All persons engaged in rural education work and others interested in this field are eligible for membership, provided they are members of the National Education Association.

Benefits—Attendance at the biannual convention meetings of the Department.

The right to vote and hold office and have a voice in shaping departmental policies.

Opportunity for service to rural children thru active participation in a national organization.

Membership (dues $2) entitles one to receive the following publications:

1. The 1945 Yearbook, *Rural Schools for Tomorrow*
2. Official Proceedings of the Department
3. *Research Bulletin* of the NEA (four issues a year)
4. Other publications as available.

Contributors

Baker, O. E.	Professor of Economic Geography, University of Maryland, College Park, Md.
Bathurst, Effie G.	Supervisor, Inter-American Teacher Education Project, United States Office of Education, Washington, D. C.
Broady, K. O.	Director, University Extension Division, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebr.
Brunner, Edmund de S.	Professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, N. Y.
Butterworth, Julian E.	Professor of Rural Education (Educational Administration), School of Education, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.
Chisholm, Leslie L.	Associate Professor of Education, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash.
Cyr, Frank W.	Professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, N. Y.
Dawson, Howard A.	Director of Rural Service, National Education Association, Washington, D. C.
Martin, James W.	Director, Bureau of Business Research, College of Commerce, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Ky.
Morgan, Barton	Head, Department of Vocational Education, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa
Morrow, Glenn D.	Assistant, Bureau of Business Research, College of Commerce, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Ky.
Roberts, Roy W.	Professor of Agricultural Education, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Ark.
Smiley, D. F.	Lieutenant Commander, Marine Corps, United States Naval Reserve, Washington, D. C.
Smith, William A.	Associate Professor of Rural Education, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.
Stoneman, Merle A.	Assistant Director, University Extension Division, and Assistant Professor of School Administration, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebr.
Taeuber, Conrad	Assistant Chief, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.
Warren, Stanley W.	Professor of Farm Management, Department of Agricultural Economics and Farm Management, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.
Wofford, Kate V.	Director of Rural Education, State Teachers College, Buffalo, N. Y.

Foreword

The war has revealed both strength and weakness in our rural schools. Problems in rural education have been brought to the limelight and others will no doubt appear with the return of peace. The question is what can be done to solve them.

This is the second yearbook sponsored by the Commission on Rural Education and the War, the first being *Rural Schools and the War* which was designed to assist in carrying on the wartime duties of the school without sacrificing the basic values and principles of sound education. The purpose of this yearbook is to focus attention on the postwar problems of rural schools with the idea that local, state, and national leaders should now lay plans for the strengthening of the entire rural school structure and program when peace returns.

It is hoped that this publication will be used by thousands of discussion groups thruout the nation as a basis for considering the fundamental social and economic problems of rural people, the implications of these problems for the programs of rural schools, and the practical steps necessary for the improvement of rural education. It is the belief of the Commission that progress will take place in direct proportion to the attention the rural people give to their own educational problems.

In Part I the desirable goals for living in rural America are presented. These goals have to do with standards and services necessary to desirable family and community living, with the earning of a livelihood, and with interrelationships of rural and urban communities.

In Part II the basic data pertaining to the major social and economic problems of rural people are presented with special emphasis on their significance to the conduct of educational programs in rural areas.

In Part III the major problems of schools in rural areas are presented, problems of the curriculum, the teaching staff, organization and administration, and finance. It is especially important that Parts I and II should be read as background material for the ideas presented in Part III.

The Department of Rural Education is grateful to the Commission on Education and the War for planning and sponsoring this yearbook, and especially to Julian E. Butterworth for so ably editing it with great skill and energy and with complete devotion to the cause of rural education.

Howard A. Dawson
Director of Rural Service
National Education Association

January 3, 1945

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Let's Talk About Rural Schools for Tomorrow

This yearbook was written to be of help to groups that wish to discuss rural schools and how to make them better.

Here are some suggestions for getting somewhere in neighborhood or community discussion:

As sponsor of a discussion group. Send a copy of this yearbook to members beforehand well in advance of the meeting. Select one of the neighbors to serve as leader. Invite representative community members to participate. Make everybody comfortable. Place chairs in a circle. Introduce everybody.

As a member of the group. Enter into the discussion freely. Tell what you know and think. Speak briefly and to the point. Listen well. Seek the truth. Don't be ruled by your prejudices. Stay on the subject. Everybody stay seated.

As the leader of a discussion. Study the yearbook in advance. Ask others to study special parts. Prepare timely questions that are of greatest local interest. On every question get local experience and judgment into the open first. Use material from the yearbook whenever it is helpful.

Usually put questions to all or part of the group. Try to get everybody to participate. Sum up the discussion now and then. Stay on the subject.

If you need another session to finish the discussion, plan one.

Plan for action.

Adapted from a discussion guide issued by the Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture.

PART I

For What Kind of Rural Living Should We Strive?

What kind of homes should rural people have? What modern conveniences are desirable? What services and social activities are necessary and desirable for rural people? What about medical and health services? Recreational and social activities? Library facilities? Community and home beautification? How can rural people obtain larger incomes? What common interest do country and city people have? What do the answers to these questions have to do with the programs of the schools?

Ideas to help answer these and similar questions are presented in Part I. The ideals and goals for which we strive determine in a large measure what kind of schools we want and will have.

Remember that Part I and Part II of this yearbook give essential background material for Part III that deals with specific educational problems.

Chapter 1

Goals for Rural Living in America

As this is written, the end of the European war seems not far away. What is ahead for rural America? What social and economic problems will this postwar period pose for us? What may education do to assist in the solution of those problems?

War is a devastating experience, but frequently it has also been a challenging one. War tends to reveal the weaknesses as well as the strengths in the national life; it makes us aware of new problems and suggests new opportunities. In a democracy such as ours, devoted on the whole, as we believe, to promoting the welfare of the common man, we naturally give attention to the limitations and the opportunities made evident by war and seek ways and means of providing more of the good life for everyone. As a result, wars are often followed by what is, in effect, a renaissance in public education.

In the United States where resources are practically unlimited as compared with those of most nations, war debts have been a challenge to the national effort rather than a deterring influence. While this present war has made unparalleled demands upon our national wealth, there is hope that once again we can proceed in our search for conditions that make for a more satisfying type of living. This yearbook assumes that such a trend will take place, undertakes to outline some of the major problems that appear likely to arise in the rural areas, and attempts to stimulate discussion regarding the nature of the educational program that will be most helpful.

If our hopes are not realized and if the vast national debt becomes a drag on our program of social improvement, then, more than ever, it will be necessary for us to reevaluate the educational program in order to secure maximum results with the funds available. This is likely to be even more necessary in the rural than in the urban areas.

Educationally, rural America has been backward as compared with the nonrural areas. This statement is made despite the fact that in certain rural communities programs may be found that compare favorably with those in the smaller cities of the same state or that are even superior to those in certain urban communities of other states. Whether we think in terms of the length of the school term, of the breadth of the curriculum, of the percentage of pupils completing high school, of the qualifications of the teacher, or of the adequacy of the building, the rural areas are, in general, inferior. These facts are so well known that we have come to accept them almost as a matter of course. It is evident that such complacency must end if we are to develop a democracy that really functions.

One cannot plan constructively in regard to postwar problems—in fact, one may not even be able to sense these problems—unless he has some reasonably definite goals that he believes should be sought. While most of us probably agree in a general way on the kind of rural life we want in America, there is an advantage in stating our objectives as definitely as possible.

What are the major goals with which we should be concerned as we undertake to plan a more effective type of education?

IMPROVED FAMILY AND COMMUNITY LIVING

Of the many elements involved in this search for a more satisfying type of life, the following may be mentioned:

Household conveniences—Reducing the drudgery in rural living, especially on the farm. The following data from the 1940 census show how far standards in rural homes fall below those of the cities:

TABLE 1. Comparison of Facilities, Rural and Urban

Facilities	*Percentage of homes*		
	Urban	*Rural nonfarm*	*Rural farm*
1. Running water in home	93.5%	55.9%	17.8%
2. Toilet facilities in home	83.0	43.2	11.2
3. Bath tub or shower			
Exclusive use	77.5	40.8	11.8
Shared use	7.3	1.9	.2
4. Lighting equipment—electric	95.8	77.8	31.3
5. Refrigeration—electric	56.0	38.7	14.9
6. Radio	91.9	79.0	60.2

Little imagination is required to enable one to understand why, when conditions are as poor as indicated by the facts above, women would often prefer to live elsewhere than the country if opportunity for earning a living could be provided, and why men would like to relieve their wives of the drudgery involved.

Health services—More adequate medical service constitutes one of the most important means of bringing about improvement in family and community living. In 1928 there were only seventy-eight physicians per 100,000 population in places under 5000 population as compared with 126 for the country as a whole. Furthermore, there had been a decline in the number of physicians in rural areas during the period 1906 to 1929. The distribution among states is anything but uniform. In 1936, altho New York State had one physician to each 557 persons, South Carolina had only one to each 1454 persons, and Alabama one to each 1423 persons.

Service thru public health officials is improving but is as yet insufficient. The movement toward full-time public health officers in charge of county-wide programs begun in 1911 had expanded until, in 1942, 1828 of the 3073 counties had full-time public health service either thru single county units, local districts, or state district units. However, in 1937, 941 counties (30.6 percent) still had no registered hospitals. Of these counties, 60 percent lay wholly within a thirty-mile radius of hospitals in adjoining territory. This still leaves 368 counties, only parts of which are within thirty miles of existing hospitals, and thirteen counties, no parts of which are within thirty miles of a registered hospital. With the increase in specialization in medical service, clinics and laboratories become important adjuncts to an effective medical program. The number of these is quite inadequate.

Recreation and social activities—Rural people have had their peculiar forms of recreation and sociability—the Sunday-school picnic, the spelling match, the Sunday dinner with friends and relatives, the Fourth of July celebration. New conditions have caused these to disappear or have changed their nature. Instead, the radio and the automobile have brought within practicable distance the consolidated school with its increasing number of school-community activities, the moving picture in the county seat, the ball games, and even the art gallery, the historical museum, and the library in the more distant city.

But only here and there does a rural community envision a recreational program within its own sphere of influence and then proceed to implement that vision. One community that has done this is Warsaw, New York, a village of 4000 in the west-central part of the state. This village has taken over the old fairgrounds, and has provided[1] tennis courts, a swimming pool and bathhouse, Boy Scout and Girl Scout cabins, a wading pool, picnic grounds with fireplaces and tables, picnic pavilion, football field, track, horseshoe courts, hard- and soft-ball diamonds, basketball court, and archery course. Funds have come from the PWA, from bequests, and from public taxes. In contrast to the Warsaw program, promoted thru village officials, St. Louis County, Minnesota, has developed a recreational program around and thru the schools. Its program includes adult education, athletics, dramatics, music, arts and crafts, and many forms of social recreation.[2]

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[1] Information from Lewis H. Bishop, village clerk, Warsaw, N. Y.

[2] Hjelte, George. *The Administration of Public Recreation*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1940. p. 108-17.

Library facilities—The provision of libraries to satisfy the reading hunger of a more and more literate people is still far from satisfactory. In 1941, 57 percent of such persons did not have ready access to a library. Over 20 percent of the counties of the United States had no libraries within their boundaries, the condition being especially bad in the South. In meeting this situation, the public school appears to be a hopeful means of supplementing the traveling library. Especially is this true in schools of the consolidated type where town and country are learning to work together on the educational phase of a higher standard of living.

Aesthetic appreciation and standards—Ability to appreciate beauty is coming to be recognized as an important factor in a satisfying type of rural life. Where the beauty of growing fields, of flowers and trees, of birds and animals, of rolling hills and winding streams have failed to arouse more than a sensuous appreciation of these beauties of nature, education is exerting an influence. The nature study movement in the public schools is gaining, and with each new generation of pupils there is an increased knowledge that makes for appreciation based upon understanding.

An appreciation of the fine arts is growing. Frequently, rural communities have been given an opportunity to see copies of the works of the masters thru their utilization in the decoration of classrooms, and thru school and community art exhibits. Rural music and rural drama have always been important. A tendency to develop the creative powers in art is showing itself in the rural areas. For example, at least two universities—the University of Wisconsin in 1940 and Cornell University in 1942—have held art exhibits during their farm and home weeks, in which farm men and women have exhibited their works. Anyone who has seen those exhibits will admit that there is more than a little talent that should be encouraged. This the school should do.

There are still many unattractive farm homes as there are many unattractive city homes. The homemaking program in consolidated and village schools is providing the young women of tomorrow with new standards of good taste as well as comfort in the rural home. Likewise, the Home Bureau is one of several agencies exerting a similar influence upon the older women. More lacking than aesthetic standards is the income by which these standards may be attained.

A LARGER SHARE OF THE NATIONAL INCOME FOR RURAL PEOPLE

A better type of education or other higher standard of living cannot be achieved until there is an increase in the income of those living in rural areas. That the cash income of rural people is, on the average, less than that of urban people, is common knowledge. The problem in respect to income and educational responsibility has sometimes been summarized in words similar to those used by Chew: "Farm people are responsible for the care and education of some 31 percent of the nation's children; yet farm income is only 9 percent of the national income."[3] Even when we take into account the addition to income represented by produce grown and consumed on the farm, by the difference in cost of living between rural and urban communities, and similar factors, as pointed out in Chapter 4, it is clear that the rural areas are at a disadvantage.

What may be done to improve this condition? Five modes of approach may be mentioned here:

Government action—The whole citizen group, thru government, may undertake to control and direct economic forces so that the farmer is placed in a more favorable economic situation. However, these forces are complex and no one seems to have discovered just how they will operate under a given set of circumstances. An illuminating analysis of the development of agricultural policy since the First World War has been made by Chester Davis.[4] Undoubtedly as we and other nations experiment with these and similar policies, and especially as we carry on significant research, we shall be able to make use of government as a means of achieving more nearly what we wish it to achieve. But even under the most fortunate of policies, few of us would like to see the major part of this responsibility shifted to government. As individuals and as groups, we should strive to influence the situation.

Individual efficiency—The individual farmer can undoubtedly add to his income by more intelligent planning in both production and distribution. In Chapter 3, Stanley W. Warren outlines the major factors that assist in making agriculture pay.

Cooperatives—Thru cooperation individuals may establish agencies for selling their products and for purchasing the necessities of living so as to increase their income or to make what they have go farther.

Adequate financing of education—Sometimes sources of taxation can be modified to increase funds available for education. Commonly, the various states distribute funds to help the various communities maintain a minimum educational program. Thru certain activities such as vocational education and agricultural and home economics extension work, the federal government has undertaken to overcome partially the lack of adequate wealth in the rural areas. Proposals looking toward assistance from the federal government in maintaining a minimum educational program thruout the nation have been proposed from time to time since the last war, and undoubtedly increased attention will be given to those proposals in the years ahead. (See Chapter 12.)

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[3] Chew, Arthur P. "The City Man's Stake in the Land." *Farmers in a Changing World.* Yearbook of Agriculture, 1940. U. S. Department of Agriculture. Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, 1940. p. 372.

[4] Davis, Chester C. "The Development of Agricultural Policy Since the End of the World War." *Farmers in a Changing World.* Yearbook of Agriculture, 1940. U. S. Department of Agriculture. Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, 1940. p. 297-326.

Vital programs of education—An effective program of education may influence all these policies in a really vital way. As the young person is given a broader education, his insight into economic law may grow and he may develop such understanding as will enable him to influence governmental policy more intelligently. Thru various types of special preparation he may become more proficient vocationally, may learn how to conserve both physical and human resources to greater advantage, may use his income more wisely to achieve the ends that he has established as the result of a careful evaluation of his needs and those of his family. Seldom has the school in rural areas met its responsibilities in these respects as completely as it should. Far-reaching reforms in public education in the rural areas are involved, but little progress can be made until rural citizens take an active interest in the whole program.

COOPERATION WITH URBAN PEOPLE

We may usefully segregate the problems of rural and city people for the purpose of studying them. We must not forget, however, that all Americans are interested in the same general objectives. Conflicts between rural and urban groups are bound to arise, but the solution of the issues will be more readily found if each group considers the stake of the other, and the ways in which the two may deal with matters of common concern.

It is obvious that the city man has a vital concern in the ability of the rural areas to provide adequate food at a reasonable price. It is equally obvious that the rural citizen is concerned that the city person have work at a sufficiently high income to permit him to purchase the maximum amount of the products of the farm. An authority in this field[5] has recently given some figures that show the degree of interdependence of rural and urban groups: In 1929 the farms furnished 40 percent of the raw materials used by our factories and gave employment to 33 percent of our factory workers; railroads received 22 percent of freight revenue from the transportation of farm products; 90 percent of the cash income from farm products was derived from consumers in the domestic market; typical wage earners spent 35 to 40 percent of their actual income for food and 10 percent more for clothing; farmers got 40 to 50 percent of the average dollar spent for food in retail markets; and urban workers probably received about 60 percent of what farmers spent for industrial products and services.

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[5] Bean, Louis H. "The Farmer's Stake in Greater Industrial Production." *Farmers in a Changing World.* Yearbook of Agriculture, 1940. U. S. Department of Agriculture. Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, 1940. p. 343-65.

These economic interrelationships should make clear that the city man, quite apart from humanitarian motives, will be concerned with general policies that affect the welfare of rural people. He is concerned that conditions be satisfactory with regard to health and housing, that there be a sound policy of conservation thru control of soil erosion, floods, and the like. He is concerned that there be no undue tax delinquency in the rural areas. He is concerned that there be adequate space for parks and other recreational facilities, and for the conservation of wild life. Both groups should be solicitous in seeing to it that there be an educational program in city and country that will prepare young people, not only for their particular environments, but for a more intelligent participation in policies affecting the national welfare. In brief, full, complete living demands that there be opportunity to experience the best in both city and country. Few city or country schools have dealt seriously with this problem.

TRENDS TOWARD A MORE FUNCTIONAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The schools have tended to stress the teaching of subjects—reading, writing, mathematics, history, and the like. Today the emphasis is shifting; we think of subjects as means, not ends. Believing that the principal purpose of the school is to develop the abilities of the individual, not merely to give him information, we seek to utilize all kinds of significant materials. The traditional school subjects are, of course, important in developing abilities, but they represent only one means that may be utilized.

Naturally we stress the development of those abilities that will enable children and young people to meet satisfactorily the major responsibilities of life. Because these responsibilities are changing, we cannot be content with teaching the traditional subjects only. As new needs arise, the schools must find new instructional materials for meeting them. Hence, in order to deal with the types of problems outlined in this yearbook, it will be necessary for the school to offer more and better vocational education, health instruction, guidance, consumer education, and the like.

An effective purpose is the first step in learning. The major problems of developing a purposeful attitude on the part of the pupils are outlined in Chapter 6.

In its efforts to be functional a school will seize every practicable opportunity to assist the community in dealing with its problems. The farmer needs specific instruction in caring for his fruit trees; the housewife needs to learn how to decorate her home; or persons in the community wish to become informed as to the nature of the social and economic problems which they face. The school undertakes to meet such needs thru a program of adult education. If a farmer wishes to know how to repair his machinery, the school makes its shop available to him and gives him such assistance as it can. If the community needs a recreational program, the school may appropriately assume part of the responsibility for planning and developing such a program. Medical inspections show that children have deficient eyesight and cardiac lesions, or that they are anemic. The modern school undertakes to discover these physical difficulties, tries to provide a follow-up program to remedy them, frequently provides clinical facilities, and gives instruction in health principles and practices. If the community lacks a library, the modern school tends to cooperate with the community in organizing a library that may serve the needs of all. Boards of education are more and more making their buildings available for community activities such as these: forums, dramatic productions, recreation for men and women, programs of Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, community fairs of various kinds.

These are merely samples of the concepts that underlie the program of the modern school. Much progress needs to be made in rural areas before the school program that does all that it should and can do for its community will be developed. We cannot hope to find the solution to many of the problems outlined in this yearbook until the school enlarges its functions and expands its facilities. It is hoped, therefore, that the yearbook will make such suggestions as will stimulate rural people thruout the United States to seek a constantly improved type of educational program.

It is obvious that the school, even with a broadly conceived and effectively implemented program, cannot find solutions to all problems of the type here outlined. As a supplement to the school, and often in cooperation with it, various organizations and agencies within the community may help in dealing with the problems of rural life: the Grange, the Home Bureau, the Farm Bureau, and the like; governmental agencies such as the health and welfare services; newspapers, radios, forums; in fact, all activities and agencies that stimulate people to think have their place in bringing about the improvement that we all desire.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS OF RURAL EDUCATION

In brief, to be effective, education must grow out of the life of the people it serves: their vocational experiences; their economic problems and policies; the nature and effectiveness of their community organizations; their problems of health, welfare, and recreation; their relationships among themselves and with persons in other environments; their hopes and aspirations in every phase of human activity.

Schools have given too little attention to these matters in planning their programs. In the belief that postwar education will demand a greater understanding of them than was recognized in the past, we have undertaken to present briefly in Chapters 2 to 5 certain phases of rural life that seem to be particularly important in the development of a new educational program. These chapters should be read with care.

Those responsible for the planning and administration of the educational program should have knowledge of most of these matters. For example, information about the income of rural people in general and of a particular community will be informative as regards standards of living and what money may reasonably be put into the educational program. Information about rural population trends in the community is significant in planning the size of the school building. A recognition of the problems of returning veterans, of health and sanitary conditions, and of standards of living presents challenges as to what the school may do thru direct instruction.

Many citizens will find knowledge of these matters useful in meeting their everyday responsibilities. The farmer, the agricultural teacher, and the boys preparing to farm should know about the influence of the general price level in making agriculture pay, as well as the size of the farm enterprise and of rates of production. They will be concerned about the size of the farm laborer group, the trend as regards small farms, and the situation as regards tenancy and the one-family farm.

For those not in school special provision should be made. This may be in the form of regularly organized classes, of public forums, of institutes of varying length, or of incidental instruction in the farm shop or the home economics laboratory.

In Chapter 6 will be given suggestions as to how materials on these problems may be incorporated into the various courses of the school curriculum.

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PART II

What Are the Major Social and Economic Problems of Rural People?

Education finds its roots in the social and economic lives of the people it serves. It is necessary then to identify the principal problems of rural people if the foundations of an adequate educational program are to be laid.

In Part II four large questions in rural life are considered:

1. What are the major social problems affecting education in rural areas? What is a satisfactory community? What organization and what services are needed for community living?
2. How can agriculture be made to earn a living for farm families?
3. How do incomes and taxation affect rural education? How do rural incomes compare with urban incomes? What are the problems of raising revenues for rural schools?
4. What are the significant trends in rural population? How do these trends affect rural education?

Chapter 2

Major Social Problems Affecting Education in Rural Areas

THE SCHOOL, rural or urban, is a part of its community. It serves that community and is powerfully influenced by it in many ways. The idea that the school is an institution apart from and impervious to the life of its community, never valid, is now happily being abandoned.

A school cannot rise above the level of its community. If it is to progress, it must sometimes help lift the community to broader, more purposeful concepts, especially about education, in order to improve the quality of its own work. Comparably, in the long run a community cannot rise above the level of its school. It is no accident that those states in which the educational status of the rural population is lowest, as measured by the 1940 census, are also those which have the smallest proportions of their school-age population actually in attendance, which have shorter school terms and smaller proportions of those enrolled in daily attendance.

DETERMINING A SATISFACTORY COMMUNITY

It follows then that a first problem in planning a local educational program for the years after the war is to determine what characterizes a satisfactory community. A community that is lacking in important elements that contribute to the all-round development of children and adults, that is minus important social utilities or services, such as are mentioned later in this chapter, means that the school program must recognize these handicaps and compensate for them to the best of its ability. It should also mean that the school will do its share in helping to overcome the discovered handicaps to satisfactory community living. This involves cooperation with others, both individuals and agencies.

The problem of determining the characteristics of a satisfactory community cannot be solved in any easy over-all fashion. Each community differs from every other one just as each personality is in some measure unique, possessing combinations of traits that vary from those of all other individuals. Just as people can be cataloged according to general types, so communities can be grouped. Sociologists have developed several general schemes of classification both of communities and of the social elements essential to adequate living for groups of individuals associated in a community.[1]

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[1] For one of the most satisfactory of these see Lynd, Robert, and Lynd, Helen. *Middletown*. New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1929. 550 p.

It is possible therefore to list certain areas of life that should be considered in any analysis of the characteristics of a satisfactory community.

It must, first of all, afford its inhabitants the means to sustain life according to a standard of living acceptable to them. Standards of living vary sharply. It must be recognized that what may satisfy one community would be considered poor by another. The area of making a living is one of prime importance in the consideration of satisfactory community life. Other areas, according to the Lynds, include making a home, training the young, using leisure, engaging in religious practices and in community activities with reference to government, health, social service, and communication.

Once some such system of categories as the above has been determined, the task of characterizing a satisfactory community can be undertaken in more precise terms than by using, after defining them, such adjectives as adequate, desirable, or the like. It is a task that requires gathering facts, that might even eventuate in a community survey. The work could well be done by a school faculty or by the faculty in cooperation with the board of education and the parent-teacher association. No improved program for rural education in the postwar period can be built without a sound foundation of fact.

It is important, therefore, to illustrate something of the process that might be employed. In education it might begin by comparing the age-grade status, the attendance record, the achievement and intelligence scores of the pupils with state or national norms. The differences would indicate the areas within the traditional work of the school which were superior, average, or needing improvement. Similarly, the curriculum itself could be considered and compared with the usual or the best existing in the state, a process which should indicate next steps in its development. It should also be compared, especially on the vocational side, with the occupational distribution of the gainfully employed in the community and county in which the school is located and with that in the urban areas to which the youth of the community have chiefly migrated during the 1930's.

Such a process should correct such mistakes as overemphasizing vocational agriculture if from 40 to 60 percent of the youth have migrated. It should check such mistakes as having all the schools of a county install departments of commercial education and between them turn out annually, as one county did, eleven times as many typist-stenographers and bookkeepers as the whole county could absorb.

Allowance must be made, of course, for the unpredictable changes and for the dislocations the war years will produce. The military services have been highly critical of the schools during the war. In some areas of the nation there have been too many functionally illiterate. The mathematics and manual skills necessary for efficiency in mechanized warfare have been neglected, according to some critics. It must be remembered that, whatever their faults, the schools are not to blame for illiteracy if social conditions have kept the illiterates from their classrooms; nor are they to blame for educating toward the peacetime jobs they envisaged their pupils taking. There should be correction of proved defects in training but no stampede to equip the children with skills for which they will have little use save in warfare. Especially is this true when there exists the possibility that male youth will in the future have to count on a year of military training sometime before they begin their careers.

The war perhaps has shown a serious lack in our education, namely our tendency, until it was directly threatened, to take our democracy for granted, to accept its benefits and forget the duties and responsibilities of citizenship.

The teachers' salaries and the standards for appointments should also be studied and compared with the records elsewhere. These data should be corrected by a comparison of the economic status of the community, the best single index of which is per capita retail sales. These can be secured from the 1940 census of retail trade. In purely farming communities net income per farm can be used.

Comparably in health the records of physical examinations in the schools and the mortality and morbidity data by causes of death and types of illnesses may be compared with the records of other communities and with state and national norms. Again, the purpose would be to discover areas in the community's life which could be made more satisfactory by an educational program combined with action by the citizenry and their proper administrative authorities.

What is suggested here is that a process be initiated for all the main areas of life comparable to what Albert Lea, Minnesota, and certain other communities have done with respect to their probable level of economic operation following the war.[2]

THE INFLUENCE OF THE COMMUNITY ON THE SCHOOL

In all of this there is the underlying fact that the community influences to a considerable degree what the school is. It is no longer necessary to take much space to demonstrate this. A community that is unconvinced of the value of quarantine for communicable diseases may expect much lost school time on that account if an epidemic starts among the children. A community that depends on child labor to gather crops may similarly expect absenteeism or retardation. If state aid to local schools is based on average daily attendance this loss has an immediate effect upon school finances. In some situations the financial loss is greater than the economic contribution of the child workers. Another illustration of community influence on the school is the restricted curriculum often found in rural industrial areas where it is assumed that all the children will work for the industry that dominates the community. Comparably for long years the rural population in the five southeastern counties in Pennsylvania, largely of Pennsylvania-German stock, believed that an eighth-grade schooling was adequate. This was the last rural section of the state to adopt a four-year high school. It is clear then that the educational authorities in any community must in their program building take into account the economic status of their locality, the attitudes of the adults especially with respect to education, indeed the total social milieu.

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[2] cf. *A Procedure for Community Post-War Planning—Albert Lea, Minnesota, Charts a Course*. Washington, D. C.: Chamber of Commerce of the United States, 1943.

INTERRELATION OF EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL UNITS

This is not to say that the school must be the sole agency for postwar community program building. That would be impossible in our society as at present organized even if it were theoretically desirable. The school is only one agency. Others are similarly affected by the conditions existing in any given community, each in terms of its own major responsibilities. Interrelations are inevitable. The problem is to insure that these are cooperative in nature rather than the reverse.

Unfortunately conflict or "armed neutrality" too often characterizes these relationships when the school under the pressure of modern conditions moves out from behind the four walls of its building. Institutions, in the nature of the case, tend to exist as an end in themselves, tend to strengthen themselves as institutions, with insufficient regard both for other institutions and agencies and for the total needs of a given community. This is largely due to ignorance of what others are doing rather than to perverseness or malice. Sometimes it is caused by a will to power, often stimulated by an overhead state or federal office.

Over the years, however, there have been evolving out of definite attempts to solve this problem some workable technics in effective cooperative planning and operation. Before considering these, however, it is important to list a few representative agencies and illustrate the types of problems that may arise. The agencies mentioned in these illustrations are selected *not* because they are characteristically noncooperative in their relations with the school but because of the frequency of their presence in rural communities.

The Agricultural and Home Economics Extension Services—This is the largest rural adult education agency. It was set up over thirty years ago by the Smith-Lever Law. The financing is a joint enterprise of the federal government thru the United States Department of Agriculture, the states thru their colleges of agriculture, and the counties. Of the 9000 professional employees of the service two-thirds are county workers. Over one-third of these are women charged with the whole area of home and family life. The program is not only vocational in terms of agriculture and home economics but also concerns itself with extending knowledge in the practical application of the social sciences such as rural community organization and the cooperative movement. In many states there are also far-flung programs in the discussion of public affairs, in drama, music, and the arts. Each of the county workers has an average of 160 volunteer and uncompensated local leaders to assist in the program. The administrative direction of the work is lodged in the state colleges of agriculture, but the local programs are largely determined by the people themselves.

Vocational teaching of agriculture and home economics—This part of the public-school program is federally subsidized under the Smith-Hughes Law passed at about the same time as the law setting up the services just described. The major point of emphasis is teaching in the high schools but increasingly and naturally as the teachers have followed the work of their graduates, adult classes have been organized. Local committees are used but the teaching is all done by the professional employee.

In many states, despite the possibilities for overlapping of effort, and indeed actual competition, arising out of this legally determined situation, the two agencies have made adaptations to avoid duplication and conflict. However, this has not always been the case.

Other agricultural agencies—The last decade has seen several other agencies, federally supported, enter somewhat into the field of rural community service and education. These include the Farm Security Administration, the Farm Credit Administration, the Rural Electrification Administration, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, and the Soil Conservation Service. Many of these enterprises, being new, have had little knowledge of what the schools or the extension services were doing.

Public health services and the schools—To take another illustration, more briefly, consider the area of health. Here there are programs of both health education in the schools and preventive and sometimes remedial measures thru school nurses and doctors. Some state boards of health also have health education and public health programs that seek to use the schools and, under the Social Security Act, fully staffed county health units are now being set up and will eventually cover all the counties of the nation.

With the coming of World War II there has been a considerable increase in the number of federal and state agencies seeking to enlist school and community support in their programs and still other illustrations could be drawn from normal peacetime activities that have become institutionalized.

Is Community Organization a Solution?

It is natural that under such conditions some type of community organization has been not only proposed but in a number of places actually attempted.

What Is a Community Council?

At the moment, the interest in coordinating the activities of local agencies and those which approach the community from outside is paramount, and in many places this coordination is also a peacetime objective. Thru a successful council a community can often do for itself what no one agency can accomplish alone. A good council also increases the amount of social participation and develops leadership. Morale is also built by the successful functioning of such an agency.

Put another way, a community council is:

A. A group of leaders within a high-school or town-country trade area representing each community organization and organized in a council who work together to plan united action, guide cooperation, and reduce interagency overlapping or competition to a minimum, or

B. The people of the community joined together with similar purposes on a nonprofit, nonpartisan basis with the membership open to any resident over a given age, or

C. A combination of A and B.

In any case it is important to include representatives of all groups such as local government, schools, local units of farmers' organizations, women's and businessmen's clubs, AAA and other Department of Agriculture agencies, churches, youth groups, and other social organizations.

The procedure selected should depend upon the local situation and the judgment of those concerned.

ORGANIZING A COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Who Should Organize a Council?

The answer to this question depends upon the situation. Organization should follow thoro, free, and frank discussion among the leaders in the community or the officers of the principal organizations. The school superintendent, agricultural or home economics agent, a minister, leading farmer, banker, or any other responsible person can initiate this discussion.

This can be done by calling all the professional employees of tax-supported agencies for an informal preliminary meeting. Such a group could then list the local organizations and call a larger group together.

Equally well the chamber of commerce, luncheon club, or women's club could call the officers of the local citizens' groups to a meeting. What group or individual begins the process makes little difference provided it is understood from the start that this is a community affair, that when the council is formed the agency which called the people together will be only one among the others with no more influence than any other.

When enough agreement has been reached among those interested in a council, the next step is to call a meeting of the officers of the various organizations or of the citizens of the community to propose the plan and discuss it. Sometimes small group discussion precedes this step.

If plan A described above has been decided upon, the representatives of each organization must take the plan back to their body and secure affiliation. The council can then be organized.

How To Perfect Organization

Three books may help at this point. The first[3] contains many case illustrations of types of organization, activities, and constitutions. The second[4] is an account of a five-year experiment in a southern county covering countywide activities, organization in the county seat, and in a number of rural areas. The third book[5] is a broad discussion of theory and practice.

Some Principles

Tho the organization should be flexible, all persons with experience in the field of community organization are in general agreement as to a number of principles:

1. The program should be built on those community interests and needs on which a large majority of the people of the community can unite.
2. Officials of tax-supported institutions should not dominate the membership of the council, especially of type A (p. 27).
3. Purely social-purpose organizations, such as bridge clubs, are not usually invited to join a type A council. Organizations with less than 1 percent of the population represented may also well be excluded.
4. Subsidiary organizations of schools and churches should not be included in type A councils.
5. No organization or individual should be excluded because of race, color, or creed.
6. The general public should be invited to council meetings.

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[3] Sanderson, Dwight, and Polsen, Robert A. *Rural Community Organization.* New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1939. 448 p.

[4] Brunner, Edmund de S. *Community Organization and Adult Education.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942. 124 p.

[5] Morgan, Arthur. *The Small Community: Foundation of Democratic Life: What It Is and How To Achieve It.* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942. 312 p.

Two Illustrations

In one community of 1700 population there were two churches, an American Legion post and auxiliary, farm and home bureau organizations, a village women's club, two lodges, the Masons and Eastern Stars, and a Kiwanis Club which also functioned as its chamber of commerce. These organizations, together with the school, formed a community council. In it they cleared special events so that no conflicts took place; but in it they also looked at the total community and its needs. Some tasks were assigned to specific organizations. Thus the Red Cross annual roll call was handled by the women's club and the home bureau; the Armistice Day celebration by the churches and the American Legion with the school cooperating. But when a task did not fall naturally to any agency member of the community council, the council itself attacked the problem or job, as when the $12,000 community house was erected and dedicated, debt free.

In this case the council was made up of the institutions and social organizations in the community, its members being elected by the membership of the participating agencies. The council was comprised of the president or chief professional paid employee (as the school superintendent) and two other persons of each organization.

Some councils organized in this way do little more than clear the programs of participating agencies, avoid competition, and obtain more or less cooperation on a few specific projects. In this instance the council itself initiated important projects.

The other method of organizing a community council is to make everyone eligible for membership. Organizations are represented by their members, but these people are members of the community council only because they are residents in the community. The philosophy behind such an organization is closely akin to that of the old New England town meeting. Coordination is also accomplished because no local organization would go counter to the decisions of the whole community.

One such council was formed after three communitywide discussions. A considerable list of needs was drawn up, and over a period of three years some of the things that happened are as follows:[6]

A drama group was formed which won regionalwide distinction.

A health center was built by contributed labor, and a public health nurse was obtained. One room was added for a branch of the county library which increased book circulation more than eightfold.

As a result of a seven-month campaign, sixty-five sanitary toilets were built and five septic tanks installed.

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[6] This case was drawn from the experience in Greenville County, S. C., described in footnote 4, page 28. It illustrates, as does much of the work in that experiment, the strategic place of the school in community organization.

A cooperative exchange and store were set up which now do a business of nearly $2000 a month. A cooperative credit union was organized. A cooperative potato-curing house and a cooperative community cannery were erected on the consolidated school grounds. Picnics, song festivals, a softball league, and other regular recreational features multiplied.

Both these communities are handling their war services efficiently. The outside war agency approaches the council. If the program is judged feasible for the community, the council plans the local campaign and gets to work. If an outside agency tries to set up its own program it gets nowhere, for everyone approached says, "Take this up with the council."

These two councils illustrate the two chief types and the question of what a community council is has been answered by showing what one of each type has been, and is.

The ability of these councils to take in their stride the war tasks that came is typical of a number of other community organizations of this type. Nor will these councils end with the war. They are established social mechanisms that have demonstrated their value.[7]

The primary principles in the relations of the local community with other governmental units would seem to be these:

The services of the state or federal agency must be placed at the disposal of the local community. The conditions of such contribution by society as a whole to any of its units must be set by law in general terms to implement a national policy. But within these general and preferably broad limits the varying needs of local communities must be given maximum weight. Locally operating programs must have the understanding and the consent of the local people. This principle is well illustrated in the normal procedures of building county and local programs under the Extension Services and in the provisions of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration for voting on crop programs. Some such technics as these look toward solving the problem of democratic local participation in both national and community programs.

Community organization, as described above, carries this a step further on the local level. It offers the opportunity to look at the community as a whole, to see the totality of its needs and determine at what point each agency can make its best contribution. Without community organization there is the tendency for each agency to promote its program without full knowledge of the total needs or of what others may be doing about them. Because of this lack of knowledge there often arises duplication of effort.

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[7] Much of the material in the last four pages has been taken from the author's *The What and How of Community Councils.* Department of Agriculture Extension Service Circular No. 403. Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, March 1943.

Thus far in this discussion the term community has not been defined. The problem of achieving a precise understanding of this term must be faced. Fortunately the rural sociologists have done a great deal to clarify this concept. The usual rural community in the United States today is made up of a village or even a town center and the people of its tributary open country territory. The extent of this outlying area can be determined by discovering the area within which a majority of the families go to the center for a majority of the services which they require. Nationally about one-half of the high-school enrolment, two-fifths of the church membership, and one-third of the membership of social organizations and of elementary-school pupils enrolled in these village institutions live in the surrounding open country area. Over half the business in village stores and banks, and often up to 75 percent, also originates from this outlying area. Village and open country are interdependent.

In many cases the area of high-school service is a model one and can be taken as a rough approximation of the community. In the nature of the case the word "community" implies face-to-face association and hence the social agencies are the more important in determining the boundaries of any given community.[8] Sometimes the service areas of a few or many of the economic services such as those of the bank, the creamery, or the hardware and feed store, are far larger than those of the various social services. It is often, too, more difficult to map the economic service areas with precision because in peacetime when automobile travel is unrestricted open country families may use several centers especially in areas of higher than average population density.

In these village or town centered agricultural communities there are smaller units known as neighborhoods. Seldom do they have more than six services or institutions such as schools, churches, farmers organizations, post offices, stores, and filling stations. Often, however, their neighborhood life is quite strong, especially on the basis of exchange of work or machinery, socio-recreational events, and other face-to-face contacts. Their areas can be determined by the same method employed in securing community boundaries or by simply asking the people or the upper-grade school children. Since the determining factors in the neighborhood are so largely social, its members and its outreach from any central point are well known.

Defining the community is essential to planning effective rural school programs. So far as can be foreseen, the village or town centered type of rural community will be the dominant type in the United States for a considerable period of time. Granted that population trends indicate no serious out migration, the school unit, at least for attendance purposes and often for administrative purposes as well, can be based in a village unless all education is organized administratively on a county basis. All that is necessary is to make sure that the population and economic bases are adequate to support a modern school.

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[8] Sanderson, Dwight. *Locating the Rural Community.* Ithaca, N. Y.: New York State College of Agriculture, Cornell University.

There are, of course, other types of rural communities. Some purely farming areas, especially in the South, are so cohesive in their social structure that even tho they lack some services available in the usual village centered type, they can be called communities. Many of the open country eleven- and twelve-grade schools are found in such communities and are usually the center and the most important institution.

Industrial villages, economically dominated by a single industry such as mining, textile manufacturing, or the like, represent a distinct type of community found to the number of several thousand in rural America but they are rural only in their environment. The tempo of life is tied to a factory whistle, not to the cycle of the seasons. In rural America, they are not of it. Even when farm lands lie close by the community area is very small.[9] The school in such places has all the problems associated with the rural village schools and in addition those arising from the industrial environment. Similarly resort and suburban communities are often rural in size and location but have little connection with the soil and farming. More than once serious problems have arisen when schools in farming areas adjacent to such centers have been consolidated with those in such centers.

SOME SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF THE RURAL COMMUNITY

The discussion thus far has dealt with some of the problems of building a functioning rural community thru proper definition and organization. It turns now to a consideration of some of the social problems of rural communities in the solution of which the school, along with other agencies, can play its part, and with which it is concerned because the community and its conditions of life affect the school as an institution and the lives of the pupils it teaches.

War Veterans and Returning Industrial Workers

How can the war veterans returning to the rural communities of America be reabsorbed into the functioning life of the community? The United States experienced a foretaste of this problem even before the European invasion with 60,000 to 75,000 men and women a month receiving permanent discharges. Even greater in numerical size will be the problem of reabsorbing the war industrial workers who may not care to continue in industry or who may not be able to find employment even if they do.

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[9] This of course applies only to places that are solely industrial, and not to village service-station towns that have acquired an industry.

One has only to recall the serious economic condition of rural youth during the 1930's to appreciate the seriousness of this problem. During that decade there were, nationally, 2.5 farm youth for every farm that became available thru the retirement or death of the operator. This proportion varied widely by regions but every one showed more youth than farms. When the economy functions adequately this "surplus" migrates to the cities. In a depression it backs up on the farm. The 1940 census showed more persons unemployed in the youth group, sixteen to twenty-four years, than in any other age group under sixty-five.

There will probably be between 1,500,000 to 2,000,000 farm youth returning from the services before demobilization is complete and probably more and older rural people are in war industry.

Servicemen, thru the "G.I. Bill of Rights," will receive help, including educational grants, from the government in addition to discharge allowances. The community, however, has major responsibility for making educational facilities available.

The local community could well begin to discuss and plan now for its share in this task with its own sons. Agricultural efficiency has increased during the war. For what refresher courses in vocational agriculture should the school plan? How many farms will be available? This involves determining how many farmers will plan to retire after the war. Many are continuing to operate from patriotic motives and with the present high prices facilitating saving there will be above average retirements following the war. What arrangements for credit can be made locally to facilitate the purchase of available farms by returning servicemen? Should a campaign for three- or five-year leases for those who must begin as tenants be started so as to give these persons more security than is afforded by the usual type of one-year lease? How can the school, the Extension Service, and local leaders cooperate in facilitating the return of those who wish to farm to the soil? How many farmers who plan to continue to operate will need hired hands? Communities that can get approximate answers to these questions before the men come home will be in a favored position to cooperate effectively with whatever plans the federal government initiates. They will also give the most substantial and fitting welcome to their own sons. The men in the services are concerned now with this problem. There is an increasing stream of letters coming to the Department of Agriculture raising just such questions and often going into detail as to the man's resources and his hopes of marriage. Tho somewhat urban in its viewpoint a very interesting and practical manual dealing with this problem has recently been published, entitled *Marching Home.*[10] It could well form the basis for group discussion.

This problem is of paramount importance. But there are many considerations that will make its solution relatively easy. Other problems, long familiar in rural America, will remain. The job of building a satisfying rural life in the United States will not be finished until they are attacked and measurably solved. The discussion now turns to some of these.

Securing Health Facilities

How can rural America secure adequate medical and public health service? The country used to be a far healthier place in which to live than the city. In the last twenty years, however, the city has been making far more rapid progress in safeguarding human life from disease and death than the country. The number of people to each physician in rural America was, roughly, twice as large as in urban America during the 1930's. Moreover rural physicians were markedly older. The war has increased the disparity in medical service and in age. Partly because of economic reasons, especially in the South, a higher proportion of rural than of urban doctors have entered the service. Even in some of the more densely populated eastern states there are at the moment some rural counties with no doctors or only one. In Maine in 1943, 119 of 390 rural areas, or 30.5 percent, had no resident physicians. One hundred seventy-eight doctors had left to enter the Army or Navy. Many older physicians, like older farmers, are continuing their work only from patriotic motives.[11] Clearly there is and will be a great shortage of medical manpower in rural areas. Few people realize the serious drain of illness in rural America. In one southern Indiana county in 1939, one-third of the homemakers lost an average of fifty-six days from illness; three-tenths of the farm operators lost fifty-four days; and one-sixth of the children forty-four days. Such illnesses if they come at planting or harvest time can destroy a family's income for an entire year.

There are two programs, one experimental, that offer some help in this problem. One is the county health unit plan now legalized under the Social Security Act and operating in about two-thirds of our counties on the basis of federal-state cooperation. Each unit is in charge of a doctor with public health training. On his staff are one or more technicians and public health nurses. In too few counties is the optimum ratio of one nurse to every 2000 of the population achieved but even so results, often dramatic in character, have been attained in preventive medicine which includes everything from safeguarding the purity of water and milk supplies to epidemic control and health examinations of school children. This procedure has been built up after a considerable amount of experimentation for over twenty years. There is no longer any question but that a county health unit produces desirable results. While the program must fit local conditions the main outlines and procedures are well standardized and can be followed with confidence. The economic returns in reduced illness and death rates greatly exceed the cost of the unit. In some situations due to low population or small area, the area covered by a unit is a district made up of two or more counties. Interested persons can secure complete information by writing their state boards of health or the United States Public Health Service at Washington.

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[10] Cartwright, Morse Adams. *Marching Home.* Published for the Institute of Adult Education by the Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York 27, 1944.

[11] The writer lives in an eastern county. The only physician in his community, seventy-nine years old, broke down from overwork this winter. The only other physician in a ten-mile radius in one direction is about to leave for the service. In another direction there are five communities in slightly less than forty square miles with half the normal number of doctors and a population of about 2000 persons per doctor.

The other experimental program is now operating in five states with as many more considering the plan. A health association is formed, similar to a cooperative. The board of directors arranges with doctors, dentists, and hospitals to furnish member families with medical care including hospitalization up to twenty-one days, home and office calls, surgical and specialist care. The doctor bills the association. His bill is examined by a committee of doctors chosen from the panel available. They pass it for payment to the manager of the association. Often, especially at the beginning, they prune the bill. The plan encourages people to come to the doctor before an illness gets serious. The ratio of office calls to home visits has risen considerably higher than what generally obtains. Thus the people get better quicker service, reduce their time lost, and save the doctor's travel time in driving long distances after an illness becomes serious. A variant of this plan is for the association or the community as in Saskatchewan, Canada, to employ the doctor. In each case in the United States the plans used have been approved by the state and/or county medical association. The cost in the limited number of cases existing, and including the Canadian experience, ranges from $24 to $60 per family per year. Various rural cost of living studies show there are many states in which health expenditures per rural family are now as much or more than the higher of these figures.[12] Perhaps health associations of this sort either employing their own physicians or using all available doctors are one of the important answers to the problems of rural medical care.

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[12] It should be noted that the Farm Security Administration of the United States Department of Agriculture in its medical cooperatives is operating very much the same sort of plan. These are limited to their own clients. While not a perfect solution with these low income families the local doctors and those who have studied it from outside agree that it is far better for both doctors and families than anything that existed before.

Adequate Sanitation in Rural Areas

Sanitation problems are closely allied to those of health. County public health units can take care of some of them but sanitation is also a home and a farm matter. Diseases springing from soil and water pollution have for years been responsible for a higher incidence of some diseases in rural than in urban territory the world over. Conditions in the United States are better than in many countries but far from perfect. Almost four out of five farm homes in the United States have outside toilets or privies. An undeterminable number of these are inadequately screened or are dangerously close to wells or other sources of water supply. The importance of sanitary provisions here is clear when it is realized that two-thirds of our farm homes have no water supply within the house. Moreover, one farm home in twelve has no toilet or privy whatsoever. True, most of these are in the South where more than one in seven lack this convenience but even in the northeastern states the proportion is one in sixty-six homes. Public health records make all too clear the relation between such conditions and the diseases of filth such as typhoid fever. Moreover, such diseases once started endanger the total population. Here then is a possible area of instruction in health education which is of great importance and relatively inexpensive. Moreover the remedies, such as the construction of sanitary privies, are less costly than solving many other rural problems, even tho the cost in terms of a sharecropper's income is proportionately high. The United States Department of Agriculture-Works Progress Administration programs of building adequate privies during the depression helped the situation and paid economic dividends by reducing disease. In some areas consolidated and village high-school classes in the manual arts have undertaken ambitious construction projects. Such schools might at least make demonstrations in this area. In addition, the facts are so simple, direct, and important that instruction on these and other simple health procedures in even the one-teacher school can effect social change in this particular, measurably and quickly as social processes go, all over America. It is an area that should have much educational emphasis in the postwar period.

Gaining Social Security

The hazards of illness are closely related, as an individual grows older, to the hazards of age. This raises the question of social security. There seems to be a feeling that the land itself offers security from cradle to grave. For this reason and because some farm organizations have claimed both that agriculture cannot afford taxes for social security and that the migratory character of some farm labor would make such a program administratively difficult, the provisions of the Social Security Act do not apply to farming.

The feeling noted is contrary to the facts. The problem of achieving security in rural America should be prominent in any postwar agenda. Over 300,000 experienced male agricultural workers were unemployed and seeking work the last week of March 1940, according to the 1940 census. This does not count those employed on emergency work projects. The total number of rural workers in this predicament at that time was almost 1,250,000. While it is possible so to manage our economy that a postwar depression will be avoided there is no certainty that we will. Such conditions may recur. It must be remembered that the situation in 1940 was far better than thruout most of the 1930's. The groups most severely affected were the youth and those over sixty years of age.

But the problem is more fundamental. A recent study, *Land Tenure in Process,* by L. A. Salter, Jr., examines land tenure in one area of Wisconsin from the time of settlement less than a century ago to 1941, under six classes of tenure.[13] Of the many conclusions two are pertinent to this discussion. Salter says of the most favored tenure group, those operating owned farms acquired within the family:

> But all of these conditions which would seem conducive to the attainment of full and clear ownership have not succeeded in preventing the splitting of the farm units and the accumulation of heavy realty obligations.[14]

And again:

> For farms passed along within a family or purchased from non-relatives, beginning owner-operators are faced with the problem of attempting to buy their farms or of buying a large part of the value of their farms. Since, while they are doing this, they must return the earnings of the encumbered capital to their creditors in the form of interest payments, they must try to pay off the principal from net labor earnings plus the return on that part of the capital which is clearly theirs. This progress can be made in temporary periods of high earnings when the excess returns are available to the operator as special gain because his interest payments have been contracted for in advance. Tenants who hope to save money to buy a farm later are not so well favored in high income periods as are encumbered owners. The payments of cash tenants for the use of capital are adjusted annually and all of the special earnings are not assured as full additions to their net labor incomes. Where share rental terms are held constant through such periods, the landlord and tenant share the benefits of the high income period.[15]

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[13] Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, February 1943.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

There are many implications in this conclusion that have great importance to rural America most of which are dealt with in another chapter of this report. Clearly one is that the assumption that farm families, operators, and laborers have no need for social security must be reexamined. A few countries, notably New Zealand, have extended social security provisions of various kinds to the farm population against the same sort of opposition that exists in the United States. Clearly it is a problem affecting education in rural areas. The legislation already in force in some states, especially with reference to old-age pensions, has placed education with its concern for children and youth, in direct competition with age, with respect to the share each shall have of the resources of the state. Clearly, rural America is not yet prepared to accept social security in one gulp and immediately. Clearly also, the conditions that make security and freedom from want a problem in urban and rural areas alike, must be faced. As already indicated, organized education has a very real stake in this. An exploration of the issues in high-school social studies class and adult groups could well be undertaken.

The "Caste" System in Rural America

Closely related to the issues of land tenure and social security is the problem of how to overcome the caste system in rural America and bring democratic equality of opportunity to all groups in the rural areas of the United States.

Education and the Caste System

For various reasons this problem as well as those of land tenure and social security are more acute in the South than elsewhere in the nation. At the end of the war between the states, the southern Negro had no economic assets except his hands; the plantation owner, nothing save his land. The adaptation made to that situation with the end of slavery was the sharecropping system. Today there are as many "poor whites" as Negroes in the sharecropping class and tens of thousands of each group are only underemployed farm laborers. Even the share and cash tenants have an income far below the average of those in a similar tenure status in the thirty-two northern and western states.

It is worthwhile at this point to examine the educational status of the country and especially of rural America. New and significant data are available for the first time in the 1940 census.[16]

At that time the median years of school completed by persons twenty-five years of age and over for the United States white farm population

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[16] Brunner, Edmund de S. "Educational Status of American Adults." *Teachers College Record* 44: 355-60; February 1943.

TABLE 1. Median Years of School Completed by Persons Twenty Years Old and Over by Age and Color for the United States—Urban and Rural, 1940*

Classification	*20 to 24 years old*	*25 years old and over*
Urban		
white	12.1	8.9
nonwhite	8.9	6.8
Rural nonfarm		
white	11.1	8.7
nonwhite	7.0	5.1
Rural farm		
white	8.8	8.3
nonwhite	5.7	4.4

*Source: *Sixteenth Census of the United States*, Vol. IV, Part I, Table 23.

was 8.3; for the nonwhites, 4.4. In contrast, the comparable figures for the rural nonfarm population were 8.7 and 5.1 years and for the urban 8.9 and 6.8. Thus the nonwhite farm population over twenty-five years of age was barely above the level of functional illiteracy as defined by the Army. The record for the twenty- to twenty-four-year-olds showed the improvement in standards but showed also that relatively the rural population, both farm and nonfarm, has slipped farther behind the urban. Table 1 gives the detailed data.

Tho regional data are not given by urban and rural residence an examination of these data indicates that the heart of the problem lies in the South as the next table shows:

TABLE 2. Median Years of School Completed by Persons Twenty Years Old and Over by Color for Regions, 1940

Region	*20 to 24 years old*	*25 years old and over*
Northeast		
white	11.8	8.7
nonwhite	9.6	7.8
North Central		
white	12.1	8.7
nonwhite	10.2	7.9
South		
white	10.3	8.5
nonwhite	6.6	5.1
West		
white	12.3	9.5
nonwhite	11.4	8.1

The peculiar situation in the South is shown clearly in this table as in the one that follows which gives the median years of schooling completed for the high and low states of each census division.

TABLE 3. Highest and Lowest State Median Years of School Completed for Native Whites Twenty-five Years Old and Over (Urban and Rural by Census Divisions)

Region	*Urban*		*Rural nonfarm*		*Rural farm*	
	High	*Low*	*High*	*Low*	*High*	*Low*
New England	10.7	8.8	10.4	8.6	9.8	8.6
Middle Atlantic	9.1	8.8	8.9	8.3	8.4	8.1
East North Central	9.4	8.9	8.8	8.5	8.2	7.9
West North Central	11.0	8.8	8.9	8.3	8.4	7.9
South Atlantic	11.3	8.5	8.9	7.7	8.0	7.2
East South Central	11.7	8.6	9.9	7.8	8.1	7.1
West South Central	10.6	9.1	9.3	8.1	8.0	6.3
Mountain	11.5	9.9	10.5	7.8	9.0	7.2
Pacific	11.4	10.8	9.6	9.1	8.8	8.6

Again it is the South that accounts for much of the difference. In the sixteen southern states the educational status of the native-born white urban population is estimated about 1.5 years[17] above that of the rural nonfarm and 2.5 years above that of the rural farm population. Among the other thirty-two states there are ten in which the difference between urban and rural nonfarm is half a year or less and six more between one-half and one year. Only seven exceed the approximate average of the South.

The rural farm urban comparison develops two patterns. In the older areas the difference is one year or less in ten of the fourteen states. Farther west all but one of the eighteen states show a difference of more than a year and the average is approximately one and three-fourths years. The farther west and the more recent the time of settlement, the greater the difference between urban and rural in the number of grades completed by the native white adults. Table 3 summarizes these data.[18]

Turning now to those in school the age of those who have completed the sixth grade in all regions except the South varies very slightly from the average of 12.8 years for the whites and thirteen for the nonwhites. In the South the comparable figures are 13.4 years and 14.3 years respectively. Comparably outside the South the average sixteen-year-old has completed 10.2 years of schooling if white and half a year less if nonwhite. The southern figures are 9.9 and 7.6 with differences of a half year and a year respectively in favor of the females. For those of school age, not in school, the white sixteen-year-old outside the South and the West where the Indian data complicate the results, has completed about 8.6 years of schooling; the nonwhites, 8.5. In the South the figures are 7.3 and 5.6 years respectively. All these data of course are medians and indicate that approximately half the population are below the standards indicated by the medians. Moreover, they are total regional figures and as such include the urban figures. As the previous tables have shown, especially in the South, the rural record is below that of the city.

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[17] Regional medians have not yet been announced by the census.

[18] Brunner, Edmund de S. "The Educational Status of American Adults." *Teachers College Record*, 44:358-59; February 1943.

These data simply emphasize what is well known in the South as elsewhere, namely, that altho the South spends proportionately more of its income on education than do other states, because its income is lower than that of the rest of the United States and because it maintains a dual system of schools, it is denying equality of educational opportunity even to its white children and youth.

Some of the implications of this fact are dealt with in the chapter on population. Here it should be pointed out that the situation has had one result in the present war of great regional and national significance. Modern warfare being what it is the Army cannot use functional illiterates. Draft quotas are based on total population. The South has had a disproportionate number of rejectees for reasons directly attributable to illiteracy and the generally lower level of social utilities in the South. But since quotas must be filled a disproportionately higher proportion of the more advantaged youth have had to go to the military services. The longer the war the more serious will be the future biological and other results of this past failure to give equality of educational opportunity in this region. It will affect its future leadership, its contribution to the nation. The nation's disregard of the South and the South's discrimination against the Negro, however understandable, are now exacting a heavy toll. Even such illiterates as have been accepted by the Army must be given training and made literate before they can be used for active service. This holds them out of combat longer and costs the entire nation. The United States as a whole has a heavy stake in solving the problem of overcoming the educational limitations of the caste system. The issue of whether this involves federal aid in proportion to need is a real one. The costs of our neglect thus far have been heavy. The problem must be placed near the top of the postwar agenda of rural education.

This problem and indeed the others mentioned, viewed from one point of view, are simply segments of a major over-all problem. How can reasonable standards of living be established and maintained in the rural homes and communities of the United States? The economic data with respect to this problem are given in another chapter. But the matter has many socio-educational facets as well. These will be discussed in the following pages.

Securing Adequate Standards of Living

With respect to this problem several preliminary considerations are important. There are those who assume too easily that improved living standards follow higher income in almost automatic fashion. This is not so. Standards of living depend also upon the values that a people have. There are, too, many areas where income is lower than average but where standards of living have risen because the costs of some services or goods have been reduced. An example is the very high consumption of electric energy in the Tennessee Valley, growing out of the activities of the TVA. In other words, standards of living may be raised not only by increasing income but also by decreasing the costs and increasing the efficiency of the distribution of goods and services. Nor must it be forgotten that there are immaterial elements in the standard of living that are extremely powerful in their appeal. Studies made of the reasons for migration from cities to farms, even before the depression, show that a majority of the migrants moved because they preferred rural to urban ways of life even at the cost of a lower income. Finally it must be remembered that the standard of living in a given community is limited not only by its economic assets and its desires but also by the availability of goods and services. War rationing is an obvious illustration but it is important to recognize that this condition was too common even before the war. A community might be able to afford good medical service but could perhaps secure no doctor because of its isolation. It might wish a better school but, if in a county or state system, might be unable to secure the desired improvements from the administration. An overchurched community whose many religious units are served by nonresident, part-time clergymen, may desire a united church or larger parish with a full-time resident ministry but may be unable to secure the cooperation of the denominations concerned to bring this about.

Both sociologists and economists have long studied family standards of living in both urban and rural society. Many categories have been used to break it up into its component parts, among them food, shelter, household operation, furniture and equipment, clothing, fuel, health maintenance, savings, and advancement expenditures. This last term includes everything from education, contributions to churches and social organizations, and books to recreation and vacations.

Communities as well as families have standards of living. These are measurable in terms of what the community supplies to its population in services and in return for the taxes it collects. In our society the legal community—township, village, town, county—affords a means by which the inhabitants can secure by collective action services which can be obtained more advantageously that way than by each family attempting to provide them for itself. Such services include fire and police protection, education, public health, roads, and the like. The degree to which such services exceed or fall below the average for a state or the norms established by specialists in each service, is a measure of the community's standard of living relative to other places.

Quite apart from the necessary economic factors dealt with elsewhere in this yearbook, the establishment of reasonable living standards is to a considerable degree a job for education.

In all the areas of living mentioned earlier in this discussion the school can bring to its pupils a knowledge of the best practices and procedures. It should in this way create desires to achieve the best possible. The school also in its teaching can compare procedures and practices in the community, indeed in the homes of the pupils, with the best. A final step would be to study how the practices of the community could be improved in practical terms and if possible oversee some definite steps in specific homes along the indicated lines of improvement. In many cases this may mean an adaptation of the best practices to the conditions and resources of the community and the individual homes within it. For instance, some fifteen years ago the Agricultural Experiment Station in Korea (Chosen) was promoting a certain type of hen house in a poultry area. This house cost about $50 or the equivalent of an entire year's income for the average farmer. None of the new type houses were erected. But a school in the area, using native materials, devised a house costing about a dollar. It was almost universally adopted and an increase in production followed. It took more labor than the house recommended by the government agencies. Woven vines, for instance, were used instead of wire but labor was cheap and while poorer by far than the ideal or the best possible it was better by far than the previous practice.

It cannot be overemphasized that standards of living are raised not only by increasing income. They can also be raised by increasing efficiency, by reducing costs. In either event there must be consumer education to attempt to influence wise spending of the increased net income.

One of the most dramatic proofs of this principle has been going on for a few years in one of the poorest and most disadvantaged counties in the Kentucky mountains. It was started by the Sloan Foundation in cooperation with other agencies.

These people lived in two- or three-room shacks devoid of every modern convenience. Child death rates were high. Those who survived showed many defects such as bad teeth, weak bones, faulty organs, if not actual diseases such as hookworm, pellagra, and skin troubles. The bleak, unpainted schoolhouses with rough homemade benches and tables, unjacketed stoves, poorly trained teachers either very young or overaged, mirrored faithfully the level of living in the community.

In such an environment the experiment of raising the standards of living thru the schools began. It developed at once that there were no textbooks. Those furnished by the state or donated by home mission boards told about Eskimos and Indians, about the Pilgrim Fathers and the Declaration of Independence, but not about chickens and their care, vegetables and their vitamins, soil and its products.

So the teachers with the help indicated began to write their own textbooks and the children were brought into the process. On some of the best land in the state, which existed in the valleys and "bottoms," nothing but corn was ever grown. One of the first books, therefore, was about a family that started to replan its farm. It told how they got good seed for a vegetable garden; how they canned for winter use; what they could not eat; how they got a goat for milk; how they planted a few fruit and nut trees; and even how they dug a fish pond. Finally the family made so much progress its products, even to a new baby, won prizes at the county fair. Another book was devoted to raising chickens, another to improving housing. In all, local resources and skills were emphasized. The materials were familiar, the stories authentic. The parents grew excited. Soon the landscape around the schools began to change. Gardens appeared. Storage cellars were constructed. Homes were repaired and improved. Chicken houses were built. The work spilled over into other parts of the curriculum. In one school the children wrote their own victory garden songs to familiar folk tunes. All this went on in ungraded, one-room, one-teacher schools. The details were supplied of course by the experts at the state college of agriculture. Other experts guided the vocabulary used.

As this experiment has gone on the results in a gradual improvement in the standard of living have been noticeable in many particulars. Monetary values are not the sole criteria by any means. Improved nutrition thru a more wholesome and diversified diet has brought improved health. The emphasis on using local resources has created a new interest in the lives of the people. The progress made has been concrete and tangible. It has given the people new respect for themselves and their community. It has improved morale. The enterprise, beginning in the school and spilling over into the homes, has drawn parents and children together in a strong mutual interest. All this has reacted favorably on the school and the attitude of adults toward it.

The movement has spread. Comparable experiments adapted to local conditions are under way in British Columbia, Florida, Michigan, New England, and Puerto Rico. South American countries are showing interest. A number of teachers colleges are taking account of these procedures in their training. This shows again that education can be a potent factor in producing social change. It opens new vistas for the rural school.

This experiment is not presented as *the* way for the school to affect the standard of living. It is an important way. Others have indeed been noted in this chapter.

Chapter 3

Making Agriculture Pay

THE GENERAL PRICE LEVEL

OVER a long period of years the most important single factor affecting farm profits is the general price level. Figure 1 indicates the fluctuation of the general price level in the United States during the past 150 years. A glance at the chart indicates that these fluctuations have been violent. A man who started farming in 1870 bought a farm and equipment at high prices and for the next twenty-five years he had the experience of gradually falling prices. During most of this period his financial affairs turned out worse than he thought they would. His son, who started farming in 1896, bought his farm and equipment at low prices and had the experience of nearly twenty-five years of rising prices. Almost all of his business ventures turned out better than he thought they would.

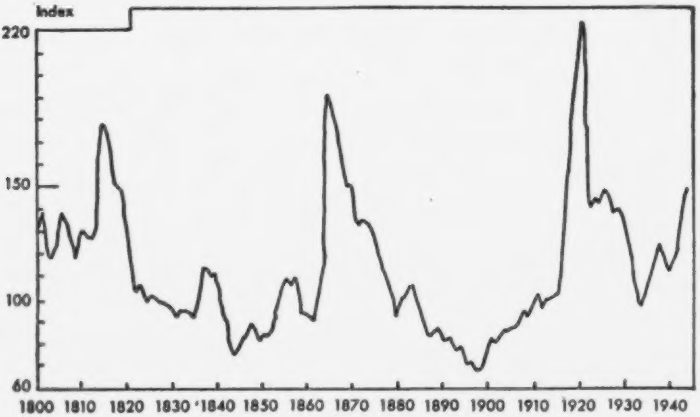

Figure 1. The General Price Level of the United States
1800-1943
1910-14=100

The general price level has never been stable for long periods of time. Violent fluctuations in prices have become progressively more serious with the increasing complexity of modern economic society.

One of the most serious aspects of rising and falling prices is that prices of various items change at different rates. As indicated in Figure 2 the farm price of food in the United States rises and falls more violently than the retail price or the costs of distribution. For the most part farmers are in the position of selling the kinds of products which fluctuate widely in price and buying products of which the price fluctuations are less violent. Thus, farmers are benefited by a rising price level and adversely affected by a falling price level.

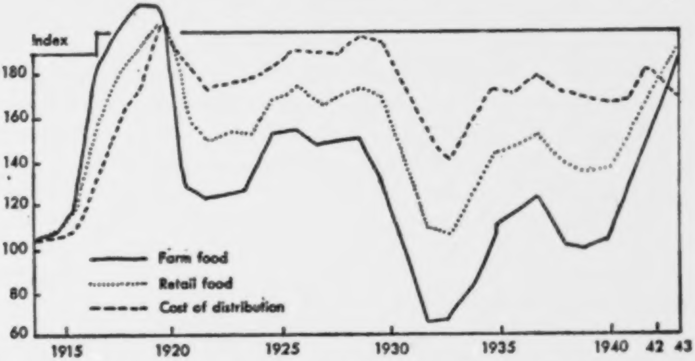

Figure 2. United States Farm Prices of Foods, Retail Prices of the Same Food Products, and the Cost of Distribution

Whenever prices rise or fall, farm prices change more rapidly and by a larger amount than retail prices and costs of distribution. However, when prices rise, adjustment takes place much more rapidly than during periods of falling prices.

The effect of these price changes on the incomes of farmers is indicated in Table 1. In 1931-32 when prices were falling rapidly the average income of New York farmers was a minus quantity. In 1941-42, a period of rising prices, farmer's incomes averaged nearly $2000. The story indicated in this

TABLE 1. Labor Incomes of New York Farmers*

Years	*Number of records*	*Average labor income*
1907-1913	3,053	$ 541
1914-1919	4,560	459
1920-1924	2,080	186
1925-1930	7,190	444
1931-1932	2,393	-330
1933-1940	6,076	275
1941-1942	820	1,929

*Based on farm management survey records obtained by the department of agricultural economics, New York State College of Agriculture.

table could be duplicated many times in many areas. Most farmers in the United States have been financially successful since 1940, not because they farmed better than in 1932, but because prices were more favorable. As long as the general price level continues to fluctuate as violently as it has in the past, much of the success of a farmer will depend on when he was born. We may expect that sometime we will learn how to control our currency rather than having our currency control us. Until such a time farmers and other businessmen must be careful that they do not make business decisions on the basis of the movements of the general price level in the recent past. The future will probably be different.

SIZE OF BUSINESS

The typical farm in the United States is a family farm. This is a farm large enough to keep a farmer and his family employed with a little extra help during the busiest season. The acreage per farm varies by types and regions. In the wheat belt of the Great Plains there are thousands of farms which are large in acreage but where most of the work is done by members of the family and where the amount of labor employed is no more than on a market garden farm of two or three acres. Within the range of the family farm there is still a great difference in size of business. Some farms are big enough to keep three men profitably employed while others furnish only a part-time job for one man. Which size of business is best? Large numbers of farm management studies have indicated that, on the average, the larger farms return the largest incomes. The usual relation between size and profits is indicated in Table 2. This could be duplicated many times for other years and other regions.

TABLE 2. Relation of Number of Hens to Various Factors
120 New York Poultry Farms, 1940-41*

Number of hens	*Number of farms*	*Man equivalent per farm*	*Dozens of eggs produced per farm*	*Eggs produced per hen*	*Average labor income*
Less than 700........	40	1.8	7,332	166	$ 798
700 to 1,299........	40	2.3	13,267	171	1,531
1,300 or more........	40	2.9	29,420	167	2,475

*From Cornell Bulletin 803, by L. B. Darrah.

While on the average the larger farms within the range of the family size are the most successful, these larger farms have the greatest risk of a large loss as well as the best chance for a large gain. Under certain unfavorable conditions it is better to run a small farm business than a large one.

Some of these unfavorable conditions are poor land, poor animals, and very unfavorable yields.

What are the advantages of a moderately large farm business as compared to a small one? Farm management records have shown these advantages to be largely economies in the use of labor, horses and equipment, and capital. Other advantages are economies in buying and selling in larger quantities and the possibility of having a diversified business and still having each enterprise large enough to be efficient. In the United States there are large numbers of farms which might be described as "one-man farms." Most farm work can be done most effectively by two or three men working together. It takes a large proportion of one man's time to get started to do a job and to finish the job. In doing chores on a small farm much of the time is spent in getting the cows from the pasture and getting ready to milk, taking the cows back to pasture, washing the milk pails, and other nonproductive jobs. The horses and equipment necessary to handle a 100-acre general farm can often handle a 200-acre farm with very little additional equipment. The aim in farm organization should be to have farm businesses large enough to use labor, equipment, and other items effectively.

The above discussion with respect to the best size of farm business is not to be taken to indicate that large-scale farming is desirable. There is a vast difference between a family farm of efficient size, and a large-scale farm. There are a number of different ideas as to the best size of farm business from the point of view of community and national welfare. These different ideas might be grouped under three main headings as follows:

1. Subsistence farms
2. Commercial family farms
3. Large-scale farms.

The characteristics of each of these systems of farming are outlined below.

Subsistence farms operate with little or no hired labor. The emphasis is on production for home use, selling only what is left over. Most of the world's agriculture is conducted on this basis, and there are those who say that all of the agriculture of the world should be operated in this manner.

A commercial family farm may or may not hire labor depending upon the amount of family help available. These farms are large enough to take advantage of modern technological developments. If labor is hired, the laborer and the operator are on a basis of social equality. The hired man might marry the farmer's daughter. Emphasis is on production for sale and items for home use are produced only as they can be produced efficiently. The operator of such a farm must work with both his hands and his head, whereas, the operator of a subsistence farm works primarily with his hands. To a considerable extent commercial family farms are limited to Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States. In other countries such farms are found in scattered areas but they are not typical of any country other than those listed.

A large-scale farm employs large amounts of labor, and the operator works with his head but not with his hands. Large-scale farms may be divided into three groups as follows: (1) Individual or corporate ownership; (2) cooperative ownership; (3) government ownership. Those farms which are owned by individuals or corporations produce almost entirely for sale. There is usually a wide gap between the economic and social status of the manager and the workers. The farms which are owned cooperatively produce both for sale and for home use. The manager is usually on the basis of social equality with the workers. Cooperative farming has been tried many times in the United States. It has succeeded only where there was a religious or ethical motive to hold the group together. Large-scale farms under government ownership have been tried in both Russia and Mexico as well as in other countries. In Russia and Mexico this form of organization is a successor to large-scale individual ownership.

Which is the best way to organize agriculture—subsistence farms, commercial family farms, or large-scale farms? A nation of subsistence farms is of necessity a nation with a low standard of living. Most of the people are busy producing food and very few are left to produce other things. A nation of large-scale farms is a nation with definite social distinctions and one in which there are wide differences in economic well-being. The experience of the United States has shown that commercial family farms can produce more efficiently than most large-scale farms because of more effective use of labor.

Over the years the trend in the United States has been toward a larger acreage per farm in the family size group but there is no evidence of a trend toward large-scale farming. Statements to the contrary are often made, but those who view with alarm the number of large-scale farms now present in the United States should also check to see whether there is any trend toward an increase in the number of large-scale farms.

In most communities in the United States the most important question with respect to size of farm is the problem of enlarging farms or combining farms in order to keep up with the times. Not so many years ago most farm work was done by the muscles of man and beast. The acreage which one family could handle was limited. Modern equipment makes it possible for one family to farm a far greater acreage than formerly. Anyone interested in community development should be interested in enlarging farms to make modern economic units, even tho this may present certain problems associated with a reduced population in some of our rural districts.

RATES OF PRODUCTION

Farm management records have consistently shown that farmers who obtain yields better than the average of their neighbors are the most successful. Much of the effort of our agricultural experiment stations has been devoted to the attempt to grow two blades of grass where one grew before. The desirability of high yields is unquestioned by most persons. In fact, some have gone so far in emphasizing the importance of high yields per acre and high production per animal that they make it appear that this is all there is to making farming pay. Little farms well tilled have been accepted by some as the goal of agriculture. A moderately large well-tilled farm would be more desirable if one is interested in a prosperous rural community. The farmer's problem is to adjust his crop yields and production per animal to the conditions with which he works. It is a mistake to suggest that every farmer should get 10,000 pounds of milk per cow, or a bale of cotton per acre, or three hundred bushels of potatoes per acre. These fixed goals are too high for some and too low for others. The most profitable adjustment of yields depends on many factors. These include the price of land, the quality of the animals, cost of labor, price of fertilizer, and the price of the product. It is not desirable that every farmer should attempt to get the maximum possible crop yields or production per animal. Extremely high yields are expensive. There is plenty of evidence to show that good yields are profitable, but extremely high yields are usually obtained at a high cost.

LABOR EFFICIENCY

The scarce factor in American agriculture is labor. Over the years the amount of farm production required to pay a month's wages has tended to increase. Every individual farmer must continually improve the working conditions of his farm to make it possible for himself and all those working with him to produce more than formerly. Figure 3 indicates the trend in agricultural production per farm worker from 1910-43. This upward trend in the production per worker is typical of all American industry and is the basis for the increased wages of all workers. A farmer who expects to have his own standard of living increase in proportion with the increase in the rest of the nation must gradually improve the efficiency with which his labor is used.

There are a number of factors which help in improving labor efficiency. One of the most important of these is the size of business. Many farms are too small to use labor effectively. Certain regions in the United States find it difficult to use labor efficiently because the distribution of labor requirements thruout the year is uneven. On the cotton farms of the South the peak labor requirements are for chopping and picking. At other times of the year it is difficult to keep the labor force profitably employed. The use of well-established machinery is another way of improving labor efficiency. A careful plan of work will enable farmers to use their time more effectively and to get their work done on time. On many farms on which labor is hired the management of hired labor may have considerable effect on the amount of work that is done. The management of farm labor is quite a different matter from the management of factory labor. The objective of a good farm operator is to arrange his work so that the men working under him will become interested in the outcome and do some of the thinking themselves. In every community there are farmers who have found how to use labor very efficiently and there are other farmers who have not. Many of our rural communities could benefit by a wider use of the knowledge and experience of the more efficient farmers.

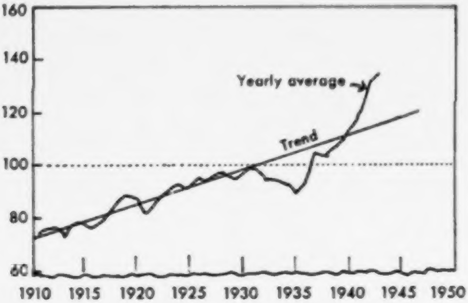

Figure 3. Index of Agricultural Production per Farm Worker Employed 1910-43 (1935-39 = 100)*

*Data from: Working, E. J. "Prospects for Farm Population and Employment after the War." *Illinois Farm Economics*, March 1944.

CHOICE OF ENTERPRISES

Whenever farmers or farm leaders get together, a subject which is likely to be discussed is the relative merits of specialized and diversified farming. This is one aspect of the general question of choice of enterprises. The tendency in manufacturing enterprises is toward a high degree of specialization. In agriculture, the long-time tendency is in the direction of a higher degree of specialization, but compared to industry, most farms are still highly diversified. In deciding on the best choice of enterprises for any one farm there are many factors to be considered. Some of these are:

1. The relative profits of different enterprises. Because of differences in climate, soil, topography, and markets certain areas have definite advantages in

the production of some products, while other areas have advantages in the production of other products. It is to the advantage of each area to emphasize as much as possible the production of those items which are most profitable in the area.

2. Labor distribution. It is desirable to choose a group of enterprises which will require labor thruout the year, in preference to a selection which causes extreme peaks in labor requirements.

3. The relative amounts of tillable and untillable land. Where considerable untillable land is available, the enterprise should be so chosen as to provide a use for this land, such as by grazing livestock on it.

4. The use of by-products.
5. Maintenance of productivity.
6. Risk.
7. Distribution of income thruout the year.
8. The use of buildings and machinery.
9. Capital available.
10. The type of farming of the neighbors.
11. Personal preference.

One of the common errors in advising farmers in the choice of enterprise is to overemphasize some one of the above factors at the expense of the other factors. For example, much has been said concerning the risk involved in one-crop farming. Most one-crop areas have chosen to operate in this manner because of the relative profits of different enterprise. In most one-crop areas such as the potato region of northern Maine there is a great difference between the profits to be derived from the most profitable enterprise and the next most profitable. Wherever there is a situation in which two or three enterprises are about equally profitable a diversified agriculture is almost certain to result. A common error in choice of enterprise is to place personal preference at the top of the list. One who has a strong personal preference as to the kind of farming he wishes to do should be careful that he selects a farm which is adapted to that kind of farming. It is unfortunate when a person, who has a strong preference as to kind of farming and also a strong preference in favor of some one farm, finds that his two preferences are antagonistic.

GETTING A START IN FARMING

In discussing factors which make agriculture pay we should not overlook the training and experience of the farm operator. Farm management records show that farmers with higher education run larger businesses and run them better than do those with a small amount of education. An example of this is given in Table 3. One who is training for farming is training for the next thirty years, not for the past thirty. Agriculture is becoming more of a science and less of an art and it is increasingly important to have the broad point of view which most educated people have and most uneducated people do not. Equally important for a young man starting to farm is a good background of farm experience. If a young man has both experience and education he must choose the proper farm. Most farmers choose only one farm during their lifetime. It is, therefore, important that they choose the right one. Anyone interested in the affairs of rural communities should be interested in an educational program which will aid in putting the right farmer on the right farm. We should avoid trying to fit square pegs into round holes.

TABLE 3. Relation of Education of the Operator to Various Factors*
10,969 New York Farm Records. 1907-1936

Education of operator	*Number of records*	*Percent of records*	*Age of operator*	*Productive man work units*		*Average labor income*
				per farm	*per man*	
Grade school**..........	6,822	62.2	50	402	218	$ 213
High school............	2,985	27.2	45	495	236	528
Business college.........	363	3.3	45	529	237	498
Nonagricultural college..	265	2.4	47	556	241	353
Agricultural college***...	534	4.9	37	624	251	1,057

*Cornell Extension Bulletin 401, p. 26.

**Includes a very small number of operators with no formal education.

***Includes agricultural school and agricultural short course. Does not include vocational agriculture in high school.

Chapter 4

Rural Income and Taxation as They Affect the Education Program[1]

THERE are many differences between rural and urban schools with altogether too many of the favorable conditions being on the side of the urban schools. In no case are the advantages enjoyed by urban schools more clearly seen than in the financial support available for schools. Many of the differences in the quality of educational opportunity offered are related both to the comparative means available for the support of rural and urban schools and to the use of these means.

The financial program for the betterment of rural schools is properly grounded on an analysis of the relative resources available, and that can be made available, and the extent to which these resources are used. Not only is the *relative* taxpaying ability of rural people important in considering the financial support of rural schools, but also the *trend* in their financial status. The probable future status of rural people as to financial resources indicates what can be expected as to the improvement of rural school support thru taxes paid by the rural people themselves. It is also important to know what other demands for public support are arising and how these demands may affect the financial support of schools.

A presentation of these problems and some of the essential data related to them will be made in this chapter.

RELATIVE ABILITY TO PAY FOR RURAL SCHOOLS: STATUS AND TRENDS

PER CAPITA INCOME

Perhaps the best measure of the ability of people to pay for public services such as public schools is their per capita income. While no exact measures of the incomes of rural and urban people have been formulated, there are sufficient data to justify the conclusion that urban people, as measured by per capita income, are more able to pay for the education of their children than are rural people.[2]

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[1] Messrs. Martin and Morrow made most of the research analysis on which this chapter rests. Mr. Dawson interpreted the data, formulated the conclusions, and prepared the text in its present form.

[2] The chief errors in measuring comparative incomes of farm and urban people arise from (a) the difficulty of giving due weight to the differences in cost of living in farm and urban areas; (b) the difficulty of eliminating from the population figures the persons who live in farm areas but earn part or all of their income in urban areas, their incomes not being included in the farm income totals, thus tending to make per capita incomes of farm inhabitants appear lower than they actually are and incomes of urban inhabitants higher than they actually are; (c) the failure to take into account income received by farm and village sources other than agriculture. Moreover, average per capita income is an imperfect measure of taxability capacity in that it means something different for rural and urban people.

Income estimates prepared by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics indicate that nonfarm people (including urban) have received consistently, over a period of several years before the war, an average per capita income approximately four times as large as did rural farm people. In 1929 the income per nonfarm person was $870 as compared to only $223 from agriculture per person on the farm, a ratio of nearly four to one. There have been fluctuations from year to year, the low point having been reached in 1932 when the figures were $442 and $74 respectively for nonfarm and farm people, a ratio of about six to one. By 1941 the respective figures had reached $825 and $237, or a ratio of about three and a half to one. (See Table 1, columns 3, 4, and 5.)

TABLE 1. Per Capita Rural and Urban Income Estimates, 1929-41

1 Year	2 *Per capita national income*[a]	3 *Net income from agriculture per person on farms*[a]	4 *Income per person not on farms*[a]	5 *Percent that income from agriculture per person on farms is of income per person not on farms*
1929	$ 709	$ 223	$ 870	25.6
1930	615	170	761	22.3
1931	484	114	605	18.8
1932	350	74	442	16.7
1933	335	91	417	21.8
1934	392	98	487	20.1
1935	445	143	539	26.5
1936	514	162	626	25.9
1937	557	187	670	27.9
1938	513	150	621	24.2
1939	545	147	657	22.4
1940	594	157	716	21.9
1941	697	237	825	28.7

[a] Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Net Farm Income and Income Parity Summary, 1910-41*, July 1942.

When the net income of nonfarm people per child in average daily attendance in school is compared to the net income from agriculture of farm people per child in average daily attendance, differences somewhat similar to the differences in per capita (total population) income are found. In 1930 the income per pupil in nonfarm areas was $4523 as compared with $891 per pupil in farm areas, or a ratio of about five to one. By 1932 the figures had dropped to $2519 and $391 respectively, or a ratio of about six to one. From 1932 to 1940 the figures gradually increased to $4459 and

$937, or a ratio of about five to one, in favor of the nonfarm group. (See Table 2.)[3]

TABLE 2. Net Farm Income from Agriculture per Rural Farm Child Attending School Compared with Income per Nonfarm Child Attending School[a]

	Nonfarm population			*Farm population*			
1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*
Year	*Income (millions)*	*No. of children attending school (thousands)*	*Income per child attending school*	*Net income from agriculture (millions)*	*No. of children attending school (thousands)*	*Income per child attending school*	*Percent income per farm child is of income per nonfarm child*
1940	$72,651	16,292	$4,459	$5,386	5,750	$937	21.0
1938	61,408	16,388	3,747	4,996	5,910	845	22.6
1936	60,367	16,307	3,702	5,340	5,991	891	24.1
1934	45,933	16,466	2,790	3,515	5,992	587	21.0
1932	41,320	16,404	2,519	2,285	5,841	391	15.5
1930	70,250	15,531	4,523	5,114	5,741	891	19.7

[a] Income data from Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Net Farm Income and Income Parity Summary, 1940-41*, July 1942. School attendance data estimated from U. S. Office of Education, *Biennial Survey of Education* and *16th Census of U. S., 1940*, Population, Vol. IV, Part 1, Table 14, p. 39. Percentage distribution of school attendance in farm and nonfarm areas was applied to attendance totals reported by U. S. Office of Education.

Recent studies have attempted to translate total 1942 income of the people into effective buying income in the various counties of the United States. Adjustments for differences in living costs, particularly as to rentals and to nonmoney income received by farmers and small-town residents, have been attempted. Thru these studies the effect of population concentration in and around urban centers has been shown. In general, the higher the percentage of population living in urban places in a county, the higher the average per capita income of that county. The average per capita income in counties having urban centers is approximately 50 percent higher than in counties that have no towns or cities with population in excess of 2500.[4]

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[3] It should be observed in this connection that the nonfarm group contains all the people living in villages of less than 2500 population which are classified as rural but not as farm population. In all there are about 5,000,000 children attending school in these rural nonfarm areas. In arriving at the income per pupil attending school it was necessary to add the number of pupils in rural nonfarm areas to the number of urban pupils because there are no separate income data for the rural nonfarm people. The only data available are for the total population and for the farm group.

[4] *Sales Management*, May 10, 1943.

The United States Bureau of the Census has developed an index of economic ability of the states which assigns equal weight to three measures of income: (a) income payments received by the inhabitants of the state, (b) retail sales within the state, and (c) the value of the output of the principal industries, including the value added by manufacturing and the value of agricultural and mineral production.[5] An analysis of the index with the states arranged according to the percentages of population which are urban shows that the twelve states that have higher percentages of urban population than the average for the nation, have, without exception, more than average economic ability. The economic ability index for these twelve states averages 121.5 as compared with an average of only 85.8 for the other thirty-six states that have less than the national average of urban population.

RELATIVE NUMBER OF CHILDREN

Another factor affecting the relative ability of rural and urban areas to support public schools is the relative number of children in proportion to the adult population. In every state and region the rural population has relatively the largest number of children. In the far western states where the number of children five to seventeen years old per one thousand adults twenty to sixty-four years old is the smallest in the nation the number is 491 in rural farm areas, 385 in rural nonfarm areas, and only 298 in urban areas. These numbers can be compared to the corresponding numbers for the southeastern states where the child population is relatively the highest in the nation: 791 for rural farm areas, 558 for rural nonfarm areas, and 408 for urban areas.

In brief, the rural areas have the larger numbers of children in proportion to adults and much smaller per capita income with which to pay for their education. While the percentage of the national income received by farmers varies somewhat from year to year, in general it can be said that the farmers of the nation have about 31 percent of the nation's children and receive about 9 to 12 percent of the national income.

TRENDS IN FARM INCOME

In order to show the trends in farm and nonfarm incomes in the nation as a whole Figure 1 has been prepared, showing the per capita income from agriculture per person on farms compared with the income per person not on farms and with the average national income by five-year intervals from 1910 to 1941. The table is self-explanatory, but it should be observed that from 1910 to 1929 the differences between per capita incomes for farm and nonfarm people increased in favor of the nonfarm people except for the war years 1916 to 1919. By 1933 the incomes of both farm and nonfarm people had fallen below the level of 1910. From 1933 to 1941 all incomes have risen rather steadily, but the difference between the farm and nonfarm groups has become greater and in favor of the nonfarm people.

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[5] Bureau of the Census. *Financing Federal, State and Local Governments.* Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, 1941. p. 99 ff. "Following the choice of the indicated three measures of ability . . . the position of each state in relation to the United States average is shown . . . by 'ranks' expressing the percentage that each state is of the national average per capita. Allowing one-third weight to each of the three factors, the position of each state, an average rank for each state, an average position in respect to all three factors."

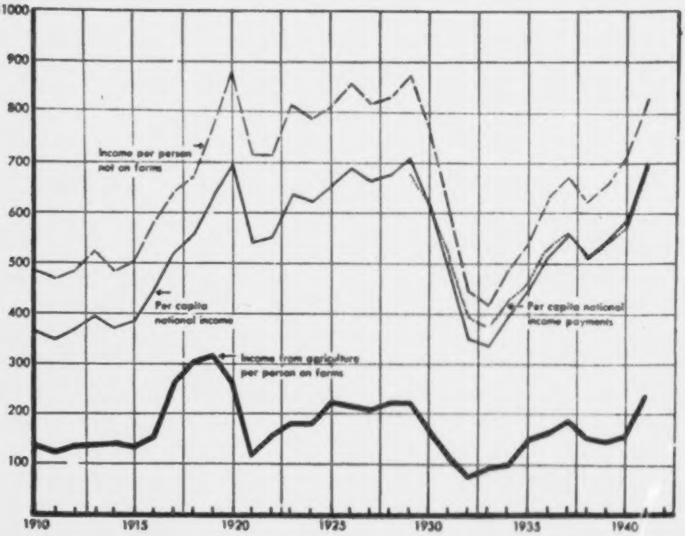

Figure 1. Income from Agriculture per Person on Farms Compared with Income per Person Not on Farms, and with Average National Income, 1910-41

It is interesting to note that altho the agricultural areas have in recent years had higher percentages of increase in per capita income than the nonfarm areas, the differences between the two groups in actual amounts of per capita income have increased. An illustration will make this point clear. By reference to Table 3, the data for Connecticut, an industrial state, and for Mississippi, an agricultural state, can be compared. In Connecticut the average per capita income for the period 1929 to 1933 had increased 77.8 percent by 1942; in Mississippi the corresponding increase was 105.6 percent. However, the total per capita increase in dollars in Connecticut in this period was $567 as compared with only $209 in Mississippi. The increase in Connecticut was from $729 to $1296, while in Mississippi the increase was from only $198 to $407. Similar, but not such striking differences, can be shown by comparing the other agricultural states with other industrial states.

In order to show the trend in per capita income among the states Figure 2 and Table 3 have been prepared. When comparisons are made between 1939-41 and the average of the boom year, 1929, and the depression year, 1933, ranking the regions shows greatest gains in the Northwest, Southwest, and Southeast. The regions heavily influenced by agriculture disclose the greatest percentage increases, notably the Northwest and Southwest. Without a single exception, the states in the Southeast show percentage gains which exceed the national average. The most impressive gains, however, were made in the Far West; the income level of 1942 was more than double the 1929 and 1933 average in each of these states except California.

Comparisons between average per capita income payments[6] for the early war year, 1942, and the two-year average of 1929 and 1933, show relative advances strikingly similar to those previously noted. Almost the only difference is in the magnitude of the changes.

The greatest gains for 1942 as compared with 1939 occurred in the Northwest and in the southeastern and southwestern states. Only four states in these areas—Colorado, Florida, Louisiana, and Wyoming—show a smaller percentage gain in average per capita income from 1939 to 1942 than the national average; even in these states the average rate of increase

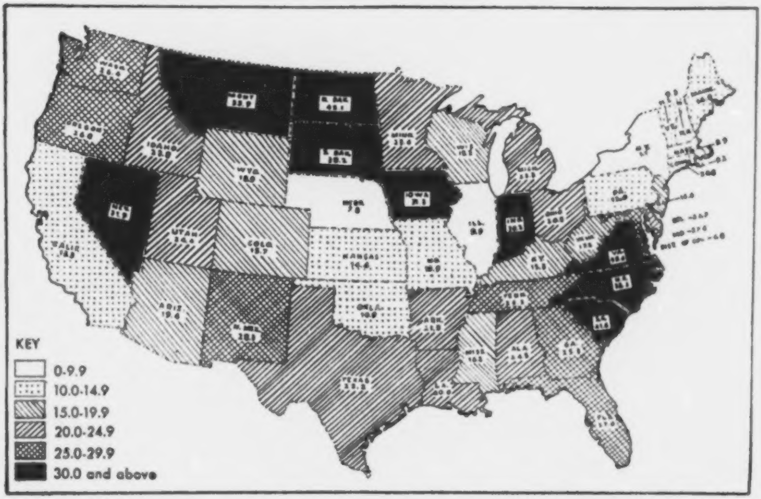

Figure 2. Percentage Increase in per Capita Income Payments by States, 1929 and 1933 Average to 1939-41 Average

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[6] Includes the income received by individuals as defined by the U. S. Department of Commerce.

TABLE 3. Percentage Increase in per Capita Income Payments by States, by Regions, and for United States According to Various Measures

State and region	*Percent farm population*	*Per capita income payments*			*Percentage increase*		
		1929 and 1933 average	*1939-1941 average*	*1942*	*1929 and 1933 to 1939-1941*	*1929 and 1933 to 1942*	*1939 to 1942*
United States..........		$524	$604	$ 852	15.2%	62.6%	58.1%
New England........		676	761	1,026	12.6	51.8	50.9
Connecticut........	5.6%	729	880	1,296	20.8	77.8	69.6
Maine.............	19.5	465	534	786	14.8	69.0	65.8
Massachusetts......	2.2	725	797	1,024	9.9	41.2	42.4
New Hampshire....	12.5	536	586	719	9.3	34.1	31.2
Rhode Island......	1.4	692	756	1,016	9.2	46.8	49.9
Vermont..........	29.4	476	529	698	11.2	46.6	44.5
Middle States........		726	786	1,039	8.3	43.1	46.5
Delaware..........	17.1	716	914	1,186	27.7	65.6	53.8
District of Columbia		999	1,046	1,164	4.8	16.6	12.9
Maryland..........	13.3	572	729	1,077	27.4	88.3	69.9
New Jersey........	3.2	785	916	1,304	16.6	66.1	59.8
New York.........	5.3	871	881	1,106	1.1	27.0	37.6
Pennsylvania.......	9.1	591	661	894	12.0	51.1	51.8
West Virginia......	27.9	365	427	598	17.2	64.1	58.2
Southeast...........		270	342	522	27.0	93.7	72.3
Alabama..........	47.3	230	286	480	24.5	109.2	98.3
Arkansas..........	57.0	229	278	514	21.5	124.9	108.9
Florida............	15.9	378	480	655	27.0	73.3	48.2
Georgia...........	43.7	285	331	498	25.3	88.3	71.7
Kentucky..........	44.2	285	329	477	15.3	67.4	60.5
Louisiana.........	36.0	319	382	534	20.0	67.7	50.8
Mississippi........	64.1	198	230	407	16.2	105.6	102.5
North Carolina....	46.4	257	342	523	33.2	103.5	69.8
South Carolina.....	48.1	210	297	459	41.6	119.1	75.9
Tennessee.........	43.6	270	340	492	26.2	82.6	66.8
Virginia...........	36.7	344	466	697	35.6	102.6	73.4
Southwest...........		356	425	661	19.5	85.9	71.2
Arizona...........	47.3	418	499	832	19.4	99.0	80.5
New Mexico.......	33.3	290	371	558	28.3	92.7	63.6
Oklahoma.........	39.7	341	378	598	10.9	75.6	75.9
Texas.............	33.5	361	441	677	22.2	87.5	68.8
Central.............		538	636	891	18.3	65.8	57.7
Illinois...........	12.3	682	749	979	9.9	43.7	45.9
Indiana...........	23.7	440	572	827	30.2	88.2	67.1
Iowa..............	36.1	402	528	823	31.3	104.7	75.9
Michigan..........	16.4	547	674	960	23.3	75.7	62.4
Minnesota.........	32.4	437	539	761	23.6	74.3	53.1
Missouri..........	29.6	475	540	762	13.9	60.6	56.8
Ohio..............	15.5	567	683	951	20.5	68.8	58.7
Wisconsin.........	27.8	473	545	786	15.2	66.2	62.1

TABLE 3. (Continued)

State and region	*Percent farm population*	*Per capita income payments*			*Percentage increase*		
		1929 and 1933 average	*1939-1941 average*	*1942*	*1929 and 1933 to 1939-1941*	*1929 and 1933 to 1942*	*1939 to 1942*
Northwest...........		$400	$482	$ 792	20.7%	98.2%	89.0%
Colorado..........	22.4	476	551	785	15.7	64.9	55.4
Idaho.............	38.1	380	470	758	23.8	99.5	84.4
Kansas............	33.6	395	452	814	14.4	106.1	111.5
Montana..........	31.4	446	606	860	35.9	92.8	67.0
Nebraska..........	37.7	416	448	774	7.8	86.1	95.0
North Dakota.....	51.0	290	411	721	42.1	149.1	121.8
South Dakota......	47.7	295	407	725	38.2	146.2	106.6
Utah..............	17.1	406	505	850	24.4	109.4	91.9
Wyoming.........	29.0	528	628	883	18.9	67.2	55.7
Far West...........		665	778	1,157	17.0	74.0	67.2
California.........	9.2	729	826	1,167	13.3	60.2	57.5
Nevada...........	14.2	632	834	1,352	31.9	113.9	76.3
Oregon............	23.5	489	619	1,046	26.8	114.1	92.3
Washington.......	19.3	541	684	1,166	26.4	115.5	98.3

Source: *Survey of Current Business*, June 1943.

is very near that for the nation. Of the thirty-three states which exceeded the national average for the year, all but thirteen were located in one of these areas; and the economy of over half of the remaining thirteen is heavily influenced by agriculture.

In general, the impetus of the war effort has served to accelerate trends in income distribution which were under way during the prewar years. Altho there are important exceptions, the agricultural states have for several years consistently experienced relatively larger percentage increases in per capita income payments than have the heavily urban states.

INCOME STATUS OF AGRICULTURAL STATES

Despite these changes in per capita incomes among the states, the Department of Commerce analysis reveals that the prewar income positions of agricultural states were so low that "the ranking of states according to size of per capita income has been only moderately disturbed. This holds true despite the fact that in many instances states which realized smaller gains in total income payments were those with higher per capita income payments. . . . In general, differences in per capita incomes among the states were larger in 1942 than in 1939 . . . . The development of a war economy not only has not yet substantially altered the relative ranking of the states with respect to per capita income but also has not had the effect of reducing significantly the inequality among states that has characterized per capita income payments. The effect has been primarily that of raising very appreciably the level of the per capita payments.[7]

The same kinds of differences in income and in the number of children in proportion to adult population that have been pointed out for the nation as a whole and for the different regions respecting farm people and nonfarm people will be found within the respective states except that the differences are often greater. Almost without exception the counties or other local areas within a state that have the least per capita incomes also have the greatest number of children to educate in proportion to the adult population. For this reason the most significant comparisons of the relative ability to support education will come from a community-by-community analysis of economic capacity to support education.

THE RURAL REVENUE PROBLEM

Revenue for the support of schools in rural areas can come from three sources: local taxation, state taxation distributed in the form of state aid, and federal taxation distributed in the form of federal aid. As the matter now stands, 69.3 percent of public-school support comes from local property taxes, 29.5 percent comes from state aid, and only 1.2 percent comes from federal aid. Just what these percentages are for rural schools considered separately is not known. It is certainly true, however, that taking the nation as a whole a very large part of rural school support comes from local property taxes.

However, those states that have the least economic ability to support schools obtain the greatest proportion of their school revenues from sources other than local property taxes. This situation has been made necessary because the local property taxes cannot, within reasonable limits, support an acceptable standard of public-school facilities in most of the local communities. State governments in most of the poorer states have assumed a large part of the financial support of functions that are supported largely from local revenues in the wealthier states.

Since local property taxes are an important source of school support in rural areas, it is important to examine what has been happening with respect to farm property taxes in recent years. For this purpose Figure 3 has been prepared. From this figure it will be seen that in aggregate amounts, annual farm property tax collections increased rapidly during the two decades prior to 1921, showed no significant changes during the 1920's, declined sharply during the early depression years, and have since shown little tendency to regain their former importance. In relation to land values, farm property taxes have followed a similar pattern but have differed somewhat due to fluctuations in the value of rural real estate.

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[7] *Survey of Current Business*, June 1943, p. 12.

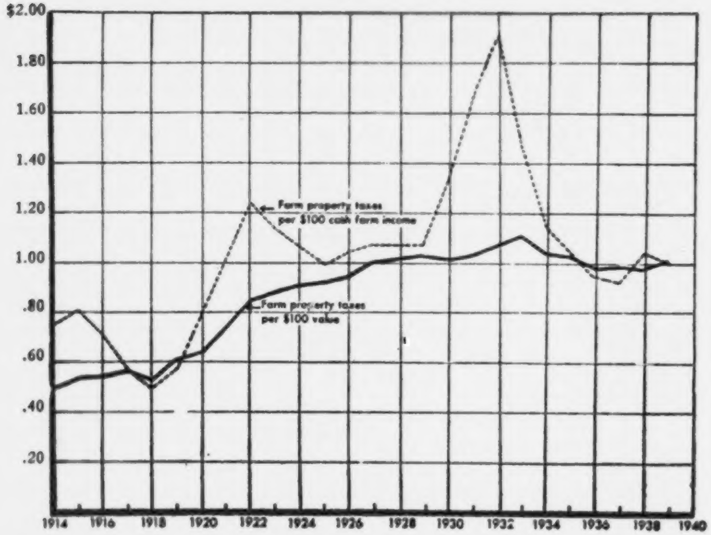

Figure 3. Farm Property Taxes per $100 Value of Farm Property and per $100 Cash Farm Income, 1914-39

From 1932 to 1936, the ratio of property taxes to land values continued to fall, even after the latter had become somewhat stabilized. Since 1936 there has been little tendency for farm property taxes in relation to land values, partly no doubt because of the breakdown in administration, to regain their former importance. Increased collections and a relatively declining farm population caused farm property taxes to rise continually from 1900 to 1928. From 1928 to 1934 per capita collections declined sharply. Since 1934 gradual per capita increases have taken place. In 1930, the first year for which statistics for rural school attendance are available, farm property taxes averaged about $60 per rural school child in average daily attendance. This figure dropped to approximately $40 in 1936, and increased to $42 in 1938, the last year for which rural school attendance statistics are available.

From one viewpoint the effort being made by farmers to support education and other public services can best be measured by relating farm property taxes to cash farm income. The ratio of taxes to farm incomes has fluctuated little since 1920, except during depression periods when incomes were falling faster than tax levies.

Certain conclusions relative to local property taxes have been well established by numerous studies and may be briefly summarized as follows:

1. There is need in most states for an equalization of assessments of property for taxation purposes and this can be brought about only thru the establishment

of adequate methods of valuation and assessment established and enforced by the respective state governments.

2. Local taxes are desirable as a source of funds to pay a reasonable part of the cost of schools. Such taxes help to preserve local initiative and responsibility and enable local communities to exceed as far as they are able any minimum standard of educational opportunity required, supported, or guaranteed by the state.

3. Over-all tax limitation laws restricting the ability of local communities to levy taxes for the support of local public services, especially schools, should not be enacted. Laws exempting private property from local taxes, excepting perhaps property owned by religious, charitable, or educational bodies not owned and operated for profit, should not be enacted. The ownership of property represents a certain ability to pay taxes. Whatever relief from property taxes is granted should come from the classification of property for taxable purposes and not from exemptions.

An analysis of the sources of revenue for the support of public services indicates four distinct trends:

1. Local taxes, particularly in the agricultural states, are declining in relative importance and are being supplanted or supplemented by federal and state aids.

2. The states and the federal government are largely financing expansions in governmental services, except that the federal government is not making any material contribution to the support of schools.

3. Altho there is a tendency toward centralization, the states and localities continue to administer public services financed thru intergovernmental transfer of funds.

4. Federal grants to the states during recent years have increased less proportionately in states that are largely rural than in states that are largely urban. The reason for this situation is that federal grants for relief and welfare have been increasingly greater in urban than in rural sections.

THE DEMANDS OF RURAL SCHOOLS AND OF OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES FOR PUBLIC FUNDS

Altho schools in rural areas use a larger share of local revenues than any other source of public funds they are by no means the only public service needing public funds and reaching rural people. So far as schools are in competition with other agencies for public funds the competition is not so much for funds from local taxation as for funds from state and federal funds.

During the 1930's total federal, state, and local expenditures for education declined from first to third place. Expenditures for war and for public welfare now exceed the amounts spent for public education. The former, of course, is a direct consequence of the war. Increased expenditures for welfare originated in depression conditions during the 1930's and are now apparently permanent.

State expenditures from state revenues for highways and welfare exceed those for education. Highways have commanded generous support for a quarter of a century. Owing to state assumption of the local road costs, the demands upon the states for highway expenditures are increasing as compared with those on local government. State expenditures for welfare and unemployment compensation, exclusive of federal aid, amount roughly to half the total state expenditures for all purposes. In general, if federal aids to the states and state aids to the localities are excluded, state expenditures for education, tho larger in amount than formerly, are rapidly being relegated to a comparatively unimportant position by increases in expenditures for highways, welfare, and unemployment compensation.[8]

At the local level, expenditures from local revenue sources for education, rural and urban combined, still hold first place, but only slightly exceed those for welfare, demands for welfare being much heavier in urban areas than in rural areas. Local demands for highway support apparently no longer constitute a serious threat to local educational support.[9]

CONCLUSIONS

1. The differences in the economic ability of farm and nonfarm people indicate that if there is to be a fair degree of equality of educational opportunity in rural farm communities the state and federal governments must accept the principle of equalization of the burden of school support thru large apportionments of funds for education. The primary obligation for equalization falls upon the respective state governments, but it is also necessary that the federal government apportion funds to the states for education in proportion to their respective needs for additional funds.

2. Practically the only source of local public revenues available to rural communities is the general property tax. Fortunately this source has been left largely for school support. The fact that state and federal governments are increasing their financial aids to localities should not be used as an excuse for eliminating or even greatly reducing the local taxes. In view of the recent material improvements in farm income, the farmers may well increase their local property taxes thru increased assessments, especially during the war emergency of inadequate salaries for teachers and the consequent shortage of qualified teachers.

3. The real competition of the rural schools for public funds is at the state and federal levels. Rural people should exert their influence to obtain an adequate share of state and federal funds to be used for the education of their children. (See Chapter 12.)

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[8] Based on analysis of data in: Bureau of Census, *Financing Federal, State and Local Governments.* Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, 1941.

[9] *Ibid.*

Chapter 5

Some Trends in the Rural Population of Significance to Education

DURING the century 1840-1940 the proportion of gainfully employed engaged in agriculture decreased from about 68.6 percent to 17.8 percent.

This decrease is attributable primarily to a four-fold increase in production per worker in agriculture during the century. This increase in production per farm worker is attributable in large part to increasing use of power, particularly the substitution of mechanical power for animal power with resultant release of feed for the production of meat and milk. Other factors have been the use of fertilizers; the transfer from farm to the factory of some processing operations, for example, the production of butter and cheese; the advances in control of plant and animal diseases; improvements in feeding farm animals; also advances in plant breeding, for example, hybrid corn; likewise in animal breeding with resultant increase in production of meat, milk, and eggs per unit of feed consumed. No less important has been the shift from the less productive toward the more productive crops per acre, for example, from timothy to alfalfa hay and from wheat and oats toward corn, fruits and vegetables; likewise the shifts from the less productive toward the more productive animals per unit of feed consumed, principally from beef cattle toward dairy cattle and chickens, and from sheep toward hogs.

The increasing use of mechanical power almost certainly will continue for many years to come and even the tractors in use have not yet had their full effect in increasing the size of farms and production per worker. The use of fertilizer also will probably increase but this may not even counterbalance the depletion of soil fertility by erosion, leaching, and crop removal. The control of disease will doubtless continue to advance, also the feeding of farm animals, and the breeding of more productive types of plants and animals. The prospect, therefore, is for continued increase in production per worker for many years and reduction in the proportion of the gainfully employed engaged in agriculture at a rate not far different from that during the past century. If a successful cotton picking machine is introduced, acceleration of the process might occur in the South. But eventually there will come a time when production per worker will level off.

The increase in size of farms seems likely to be most rapid in the originally forested regions where the farms are smaller than in the prairie regions, owing in large part to the initial cost in labor and time required for clearing the forest. In this eastern portion of the nation tractors have not, in general, been introduced in as large a proportion of the farms as farther west, but if most of the youth who have left the farms during these war years—probably three-fourths of all between the ages of eighteen and twenty-eight—do not return to the farms after this war, as may well occur, consolidation of farms at an unprecedented rate is likely to occur because of the unprecedented number of old farmers. Applying life expectancy tables to number of farm operators classified by age in the 1940 census, it appears almost certain that nearly 750,000 farms in the nation will change hands during the decade 1940-50 because of the death of the farmer. Retirement of the farmer prior to death may double this number. Some of these farms may be taken over by young men, but perhaps even more may be absorbed into neighboring or near-by farms—more rapidly if unemployment again becomes extensive, judging from the past, than if prosperity persists. During the early thirties, the pressure of population on the land worked against consolidation of farms; but later, apparently because of the ready cash that found its way into farming areas and because of the pressure of young people remaining on farms, large-scale machinery and consolidation came in together.

RURAL RESIDENCES

Counteracting in part this trend toward consolidation of farms has been, and will continue to be, the trend toward the use of farm land as residence sites, especially the smaller or less commercial farms, by people engaged primarily in nonfarm occupations. The rural nonfarm population of the nation, partly village and suburban but partly also open country, increased 14 percent between 1930-40, as compared with 7 percent increase in the urban population and a stationary farm population. This increase in rural nonfarm population took place mostly in the industrialized northeastern quarter of the United States, where the custom of living in the country and commuting daily or weekly to an urban job is becoming common. Sometimes also a retired urban worker, seeking a quiet and picturesque abode in his or her declining years, as well as lower costs of living, rescues a semi-abandoned farm from extinction. These rural residences contribute materially to the tax base in many communities, notably in California, Florida, Michigan, New England, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, without proportionately increasing the demand for public service.

An increase in part-time farms also occurred in the northeast region during the depression decade 1930-40. In many counties this increase consists mostly of part-time farms where the urban worker or his wife produced in 1939 enough chickens, eggs, milk, and vegetables, mostly for home use, to qualify under the census definition of a farm. These trends toward rural residence, both with and without associated farm enterprises, probably will increase.

THE TREND IN SMALL FARMS

The number of farms on which the 17.8 percent of the gainfully employed engaged in agriculture lived, when classified by value of farm products, reveals some surprising conditions. In 1939 nearly half of the farms, 46 percent, reported a gross value of products, including those used by the farm family, of less than $600. These less productive farms produced only 6 percent of the products "sold or traded," to use the census phrase. Only about half of the "farms," as defined by the census,[1] are needed to produce the food and fibre for the nonfarm people of the nation. In other words, only about 10 percent of the "gainfully employed" workers of the nation are at present producing the food and fibre needed by the nation.

YOUTH, A MAJOR FARM CONTRIBUTION

But the less productive half of the farms are providing a disproportionate share of the youth of the nation. In the urban population of the nation (those living in places of 2500 population and over) during the three years preceding the 1940 census, ten adults were rearing only about seven children. In the farm population ten adults were rearing nearly fourteen children. On the less productive farms, located mostly in the mountainous portions of the country and in the South, ten adults were rearing fully fifteen and probably sixteen children.

A century hence, should present differences in birth rates persist, about three-quarters of the nation's population will be descendants of the rural people of today—mostly of the poor but proud and generally capable people of the southern Appalachian Mountains, of the croppers and tenants of the Cotton Belt, of the hill folk that live along the Ohio River and its tributaries, of the Catholic farmers of Maryland and North Dakota, of the Mennonites scattered in groups in Indiana, Kansas, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia; of the Mormons of Idaho and Utah, and of other peoples who, because of their geographic isolation or religious traditions, have been more or less protected from the influences of modern urban culture.

In this connection I should like to summarize some calculations recently made by Eugene Merritt of the federal Agricultural Extension Service, who is primarily interested in the problems of older farm youth. He divides the 6,000,000 farms reporting the value of farm products in the 1930 and again in the 1940 census into three groups. Group A, which contains nearly half of all farms (49 percent in 1929 and 48 percent in 1939), includes those which produced less than $1000 of products in 1929 and less than $600 in 1939. Group B, which includes about 30 percent of all the farms, consists of those that produced from $1000 to $2500 worth of products in 1929 and from $600 to $1500 worth in 1939. Group C includes the remaining 20 percent, more or less, of the farms. The lower prices for farm products in 1939 only partly explain the lower income classes included in each group in this year. Now Group A had sales of farm products in 1929 that amounted to 11 percent of the sales from all farms, and 7 percent in 1929. The sales of farm products from Group B constituted 28 percent of the sales from all farms in 1929 and 20 percent in 1939. The sales of farm products from Group C constitute 61 percent in 1929 and 73 percent in 1939. (However, it should be noted that Group C included only 19.2 percent of all farms in 1929 and 23.9 percent in 1939.) Assuming that migration from these three groups of farms is in proportion to the number of farms, and assuming further that the income per migrant from each group is the same after they reach the cities, namely $1000 per worker, which is about the national nonfarm (prewar) average, Mr. Merritt reaches the interesting conclusion that the value of the migrants from Group A during the decade before the depression was about five times the value of farm products sold, and that during the decade 1930-40, when farm products were low in price, the value of these migrating youth constituted a still larger proportion. In other words, the major contribution to the national welfare of the less productive half of our farms, consists of youth, rather than of food and fibre. Even in Group B the value of the migrants exceeded the value of the farm products.

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[1] The instruction to census enumerators carried on agricultural schedules reads: "A farm for census purposes is all the land on which some agricultural operations are performed by one person, either by his own labor alone or with the assistance of members of his household, or hired employees. . . . Do not report as a farm any tract of land of less than 3 acres, unless its agricultural products in 1939 were valued at $250 or more."

MIGRATION OF YOUTH FROM THE FARMS

During the decade 1920-29 (years of urban prosperity), over 19,000,000 people left the farms, according to estimates of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. These were nearly all youth, for middle-aged and old farmers find it difficult to change to other occupations. About 13,000,000 returned to farms, doubtless many disillusioned. These figures indicate a net migration of 6,300,000. During the next decade, 1930-39, depression years mostly, some 14,000,000 left the farms and 10,700,000 returned to farms, indicating a net migration of about 3,300,000. But from April 1, 1940 to October 1, 1943 (war years), the net migration from farms is estimated by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics at 4,000,000. Thus a greater net movement occurred in those two and a half years than in the preceding ten years. A checkup of youth survey records in several corn belt counties indicates that about three-fourths of the males eighteen to twenty-eight years of age (the ages covered in most youth surveys) had left the farms during these two and a half years. The total farm population of the nation has fallen since 1940 by more than 3,000,000, which is over 10 percent.

If this migration of youth proves permanent, and probably most of these young people will remain in the cities or return to the cities after a period of unemployment, if such occurs, it will involve a vast drift of wealth from the farms. About ten years ago we made an estimate that the cost of rearing and educating a child on the farms of the nation during the decade 1920-30 was about $150 a year. It appeared that the cost of food, clothing, and such medical services as farm children receive, was about $110 a year, while education cost the community $40 more. Assuming that the child becomes self-supporting at age fifteen, we reached the conclusion that $2000 could be accepted as a minimum estimate of the average cost to the farming people of raising and educating the young man or woman who left for the cities. During that decade 1920-30, the net migration from farms was about 6,300,000. Multiplying this number by $2000 gives a rough estimate of $12,600,000,000, as the contribution which the farming people made in this way to the progress and prosperity of the nonfarming people, mostly city people, during that decade. Assuming the same cost per youth since 1940, the 4,000,000 net migration since April 1 of that year indicates a cost of $8,000,000,000.

However, these items should be considered primarily as indications of the magnitude of a product of the farms seldom taken into account by economists rather than a cost of production. It is true that if these youth were backed up on farms, as occurred to a large extent during the early thirties, and is characteristic of the Orient, levels of living would tend to decline, as population would decrease, and the market for farm products tend to contract. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the cost to the farming people of rearing the youth who migrate to the cities will average roughly $1,000,000,000 a year, and that without these migrants the population of the cities would soon decline with serious economic consequences.

Nor is this all. When the father and mother dies the estate is usually divided more or less equally among the children. During the decade 1920-30, about one-sixth of the farmers died (the proportion is now probably one-fifth) and the boy or girl who stayed on the farm, or some other person who bought it, was compelled in most cases to pay the heirs in the city their shares of the estate. Undoubtedly, this generally resulted in mortgaging the farm. As nearly as we could estimate, some $3,000,000,000 or $4,000,000,000 was thus transferred from the farms to the cities during that decade prior to the depression. Two billion dollars seems a modest estimate of the ultimate loss to the farming people during the past four years from this cause. Interest on this mortgage debt is a heavy burden on the farming people. In 1940 it was about twice as large as thirty years before, despite a notable lowering in the interest rate, and amounts to about $350,000,000 a year. This is a small figure compared with the cost of migrating youth, but its magnitude can be appreciated better by telling you that it would be sufficient to put a modern bathroom and kitchen in every farmhouse in the country in six or seven years. It would build a good new farmhouse for every young couple that started farming. How much of this interest payment arises from the settlement of estates cannot be estimated with confidence, but it is undoubtedly a very large proportion of the total.

Sometimes all the children leave the farm, and on the death of the parents the farm is rented or is sold. During the decade before the depression the total rental payment of farmers to nonfarmers amounted to about $11,000,000,000. Here again it is impossible to estimate with confidence how much of this vast amount arises from the migration of farm youth to the cities. But it is undoubtedly a large proportion. After making a reasonable allowance for state aid to rural schools, the remittances of children to parents living on farms, and other similar payments made by nonfarm to farm people, it would appear that $20,000,000,000 net, or $2,000,000,000 a year, is not an excessive estimate of the ultimate contribution associated with migration which the farm people have made to the nonfarm areas during the years 1920-29. It may eventually be two-thirds as large, $13,000,000,000, for the years 1940-43.

The farming people face a dilemma. If they continue to produce a surplus of youth who migrate to the cities, this drift of wealth will continue. If, on the other hand, the birth rate in the rural areas falls to a point only sufficient to maintain the farm population, and recent youth surveys in the Corn Belt indicate that it has already fallen to this point among many of the oncoming generation in this region, the cities will before long decline in population, with a correlated decline in demand for farm products, unless consumption per capita should increase. Such increase in consumption per capita is very desirable and may occur, for the Consumers Purchase Survey indicates that one-third of our city people did not have sufficient income in 1936 to buy enough milk, meat, eggs, and green vegetables—the expensive foods which carry the necessary proteins, vitamins, and minerals—to maintain good health and full efficiency.

THE ONE FAMILY FARM AND TENANCY

The obvious, but almost wholly ignored, relationship between the migration of youth from farms to cities and the increase of tenancy on farms was first called to my attention by an aged Presbyterian minister in South Carolina. He pointed out that the sons are born when the fathers are about thirty years of age, that is, about as many children are born before the father is thirty as after he is thirty. Twenty to twenty-five years later the son wants to marry and have a home of his own. But the farm will not support two families and the father is only fifty to fifty-five years of age. He has not saved enough on which to retire and he is not ready to die. Seldom also has he saved enough to buy a farm for the son. There remains nothing, therefore, for the son to do but to go to town and get a job. The daughter does likewise. Indeed, the daughter leaves for the city about two years earlier than the son. Some fifteen to twenty-five years later the parents die, but by this time the son is established in some city business or occupation and the daughter has married a city man. They are no longer interested in returning to the farm to live. So one of two things happens: either they rent the farm or they sell it. If they rent the farm, generally about half the income is sent to the cities in payment of the rent. If they sell the farm there are no young men in the community with means to buy, and few older farmers have saved enough to purchase a second farm for their sons. So the farm is generally sold to a city man as an investment, and he in turn rents it. The aged pastor then remarked, "Now when half the income from these little farms leaves the community as rent there is not enough left to support a church."

The youth surveys in the Corn Belt and elsewhere suggest strongly that this Presbyterian pastor had clearly seen a very important factor causing the increase of tenancy in the United States. Generally two-thirds and sometimes three-fourths of all the farms have no youth or younger children living on them. The younger generation has left the farm, leaving the middle-aged or old husband and wife to till the farm alone. In some counties in Indiana nearly one-fourth of the farmers were over sixty-five years of age and for the nation as a whole half are over fifty. This situation is more or less inevitable because the farm is only large enough to support one family according to the customary level of living in the community. As the farmers grow older and die in increasing numbers, the importance of this interim between the maturity of the son and senility of the father as a factor promoting tenancy will become more apparent. A two-family farm is essential, in many if not most cases, to maintain continuity of family proprietorship of farms.

FATHER AND SON PARTNERSHIPS

One of the solutions to this problem is for the father to take the son into partnership and increase the size of the farm accordingly, either by expansion of acreage or a shift in the type of farming. This solution was becoming common in the corn belt and the spring wheat regions, also to a less extent in the Cotton Belt, before the war preparations altered the entire situation. The rapid spread of the idea is attributable primarily to two factors: (1) the economic depression, which prevented the youth from obtaining employment in the towns and cities, and (2) the rubber-tired tractor. Unable to obtain employment, the young men were backed up on the farms. As time passed many of these youth wished to be married and have their own homes, but most of the farms were only large enough to support one family. If the father possessed the capital or credit he rented another farm. Before the coming of the rubber-tired tractor it would have been necessary for him to rent near by, which was often impossible to do. The rubber-tired tractor permitted renting farms as far distant as five and even ten miles. Quite commonly, one other farm, if it were fairly large, would permit the partnership to support two families. But also quite commonly another farm was not sufficient to utilize effectively the tractor and associated implements. So, frequently a second, a third, and even a fourth farm was rented. One day, while working with the young men on the survey in Blackford County, Indiana, I took the record on a partnership of a father and three sons who were operating 2100 acres of land, mostly in crops—about twenty former farms as nearly as I could estimate. In this case there were three hired men in addition. But the hired man has disappeared from most of the farms in the Corn Belt. In Blackford County with its 1200 farms we found only fifty hired men. The son was taking the place of the hired man, and he was, moreover, sharing the management of the large farm with his father.

The son was also taking the place of the tenant. Most of these farms that had been rented by father and son partnerships were previously operated by tenants. A responsible farmer with an ambitious son and a brand new tractor outfit obviously had an advantage over the poorer tenants in particular, who are handicapped by lack of efficient equipment. Some of the farms rented by these father and son partnerships were those that had been previously operated by elderly farmers. Those farmers and their wives continued to live in the farmhouse and usually reserved the garden and a small pasture for a cow or two, while renting the fields to one or two farmers, generally father and son partnerships. These operating farmers necessarily carried the grain and hay to their own farms where the stock was located. Clearly this practice tended to deplete the fertility of the rented land. At other times the father and son partnerships rented the forty- to eighty-acre holdings of part-time farmers who worked in some near-by city and needed only three or four acres for a garden, chickens, and a cow that they commonly kept. They had purchased the forty to eighty acres, apparently, to give them a feeling of economic security.

The schedule form used did not include questions as to what happened to the tenants who had been dispossessed by the expanding operations of other farmers, but two members of the Country Life Club in Blackford

County, Indiana, collected data in one township for me. Two such tenants had risen to ownership during the last five years; three had moved to larger tenant farms; five had obtained other farms of about the same size; three had become day laborers in the country, with an income probably only half that of the average tenant; and five had gone to town. Several of these, it was reported, were on relief. This was in 1940. Eight apparently rose in economic status, five remained stationary, and eight probably declined in status.

In Texas, the census reports a decrease of nearly 100,000 in number of tenant farms between 1930-40. Two-thirds of this decrease was in croppers, who are really laborers paid with a share of the crop, and have much less responsibility than tenants in the North. In most of the southern states a similar decrease (proportionate to the number of farms in the state) occurred. Some of these tenants and croppers went to California, notably from Arkansas and Oklahoma, where many of them became migratory agricultural workers, living under conditions described in *Grapes of Wrath*. Some went into the hills and endeavored to wrest a meager living from the niggardly soil. Some remained on the farm, perhaps on relief, or as laborers. In Texas, for example, the number of farm families living in a house they did not own decreased only 21,000. Many went to the cities, the census figures show clearly, where some found it necessary to apply for relief. This decrease in number of croppers in the South apparently was not associated with any notable increase in the number of wage hands. On the contrary, it appears probable that in most cases the farm remained a family farm, as in the North, except that a large number of former croppers were brought out from the cities during the autumn to help pick cotton. Every southern state reported an increase in farm owners, amounting to about 32,000 in Texas, and over 200,000 in the South as a whole. The number of white farm families increased more than 300,000 in the fourteen southern states, while the number of nonwhite farm families decreased 74,000. In Georgia the youth surveys indicate that about 10 percent of the farms in the coastal plain portion are father and son partnerships, and that this type of operation is associated with the livestock production rather than with cotton, and with the use of a tractor in addition to mules, and with a size of farm much larger than the average.

As the nation matures economically and socially, it appears likely that continuity of family proprietorship in farming will become common and that the United States will approach that condition of pride in land ownership which characterizes most of the long-settled countries of the world. Travel in Europe or in the Far East, as well as the differences between rural and urban birth rates, enforces the conclusion that agricultural land is the foundation of the family, and suggests that it may also prove to be the foundation of the democratic state.

Rural people are demanding and getting more and better professional service. The increased training requirements for clergymen, teachers, doctors, lawyers, and other professional workers have been felt in rural areas, as well as urban areas. Increasing attention is being given to eliminating the relative disadvantages which the professional worker sometimes encounters in rural areas toward the end that professional qualifications for urban and rural workers will be more nearly identical.

One large new field of work which has been developed in rural areas is that of professional service to farmers. Since the last war, the work of the Extension Service has been expanded into virtually every agricultural county of the country, including in many instances county agents, home demonstration agents, and 4-H club specialists. There has been a corresponding expansion of personnel in district and state offices. More recently employment opportunities developed in staffing the Farm Security Administration, as well as other agencies designed to provide more adequate service for farm and other rural people. These new job opportunities have strained the training facilities and have, in fact, opened up a new field of occupational endeavor which calls for the background that rural children acquire as part of the process of growing up. With the expansion of public relief during the 1930's and the development of the Social Security System, including old-age assistance and the improvement of medical facilities, opportunities have also been developed for employment of social service workers and public health workers in rural areas.

The process of shifting activities formerly carried on upon the farm, into nonfarm areas, continues; but with the development of easy transportation and ready accessibility to electric power, there has been less incentive to concentrate simple food processing activities in the larger centers. The development of small machines, of mechanical refrigeration, and of rapid and flexible transportation, and the increase in suburban and rural residences have opened a field for industrial and service occupations in rural areas which offers vocational opportunities of wide scope. In place of the growth of the large city, we have had the growth of the metropolitan area—oriented largely around the central city, but also maintaining some attachments to the rural areas. There has been specialization of services among the smaller towns and cities and there is prospect that the process of decentralization of services and processing activities can be carried much farther than has already been the case.

With reference to farm work itself, there has been a decrease in the number of persons doing farm work as their major activity. Fourteen percent fewer farm workers produced 44 percent more food and fibre in 1940-43 than in the 1910-14 period. Agricultural production per acre for the country as a whole has averaged 25 percent greater in 1940-43 than in 1935-39, and 67 percent greater than in 1910-14. Average annual employment in agriculture in 1910-14 included 12,000,000 persons. The annual average for 1943 was only 10,500,000. The decrease in workers has been greater among hired laborers than among farm operators and unpaid members of their families.

THE POPULATION PROSPECT

The outlook for the numbers of people living on farms in the future is very uncertain. It may be that by 1950 we shall have a total farm population of approximately 27,000,000 as contrasted with 30,000,000 in 1940 and 1930 and 32,000,000 in 1910. A large-scale, back-to-the-land movement, or a considerable reduction below normal levels of farm to city migration, would increase that number. The wartime demand for workers and soldiers has resulted in large-scale migrations from most rural areas. In some of the more rural states, the losses have been particularly large. In most Great Plains states, which reported some loss in population between 1930-40, the population in 1944 was less than it was in 1920.

These, as well as the rural areas which have lost at a less rapid rate, face difficult problems in planning for schools and other institutions. Whether or not there is any considerable migration to these areas will depend less on what happens to them than upon the economic condition of the country as a whole, and especially upon economic conditions in the centers of industry which have grown so rapidly in recent years. Scattered surveys of the intentions of migrants to centers of war industry suggest that a very large proportion of them do not expect to return to the places from which they came. If the goal of full employment can be attained, it seems likely that the areas of low agricultural productivity are likely to continue with a population considerably less than that which they had in 1940, and it may well be that most farm areas will continue with less population than in 1940. But many families will wish to live in rural areas in order to carry on part-time farming or to live on small retirement units, or for other reasons. However, these families do not and will not contribute materially to commercial agricultural production.

The record of migration from farms during the past twenty-five years shows a close inverse relationship to the productive level at which our economy was functioning. When the number of nonagricultural jobs available increased, the number of people who migrated from farms increased and the farm population decreased. During the past four years there has occurred the largest movement of people from the American farms ever recorded in so short a period of time. If migration from farms had continued at the same rate as during the last five prewar years, nearly 2,000,000 persons would have left the farms in the normal course of events during the four-year war period. The excess net migration from farms during the last four years has been, roughly, 4,000,000 persons. What occurs by way of population movements into agriculture after the war will largely depend on the behavior of the extra 4,000,000 people who left the land during the war period. The situation was recently summarized by Carl C Taylor of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, as follows:

> 1. The volume of migration which agriculture can readily absorb following the war, even under favorable economic conditions, will be a volume approximately equal to the number of those who will withdraw, after the war, from the present agricultural working force.
>
> 2. If there is full industrial employment few of those now employed in industry will choose to return to farms.
>
> 3. Under any other conditions than extreme economic depression there will continue to be many boys and girls born and reared on farms who, as in the past, will move cityward. This is a normal trend.
>
> 4. If we do suffer a depression the movement of population from farms will slow down and there may be a back-to-the-land movement.
>
> 5. Any stimulation of civilians to move from industrial centers to farms will not only encourage an unnatural trend but invite agricultural maladjustment and agricultural underemployment. Farm born and reared boys returning from military service will probably more than suffice to replace all those withdrawing from the farm labor force following the war.
>
> 6. If economic conditions following the war are such as to warrant a movement of some presently industrially employed civilians to farms, the best possible planning will be necessary to guarantee, in as far as possible, that they settle in the best locations and receive the maximum technical agricultural guidance.

PART III

How Can the Schools Be Made To Serve the Needs of Rural People?

The rural school is always in some social and economic setting. Its program of instruction grows, or should grow, out of its environment in terms of its purposes. In Parts I and II the chief factors in the rural environment have been set forth. With due consideration of these factors, Part III deals directly with program and organization of rural schools.

1. What are the purposes of the rural school? What is its work in terms of those purposes?

2. How can the rural schools obtain competent teachers? What is a competent rural teacher?

3. How can effective rural school organization and administration be obtained?

4. How can rural community activities be coordinated for educational purposes?

5. How can an efficient program of pupil transportation be provided?

6. What kind of school buildings and equipment do rural schools need?

7. How should the rural school program be financed? What are the obligations of the local, state, and federal governments?

Chapter 6

The Purposes and Work of Rural Schools

PROBLEM I. WHAT ARE PURPOSES AND HOW ARE THEY BUILT?

THERE is a purpose, conscious or unconscious, behind every act of the school. In every lesson taught, every new course introduced, every field trip, every basketball practice, every play rehearsal, every class meeting, every conference between teacher and pupil, every public meeting, every board meeting, every selection of a new teacher some purpose guides the action and some purpose is served. One of the great difficulties of the school is the fact that its purposes are often not clearly thought thru. There is probably no way in which a school can be improved more at less cost than thru intelligent discussion which develops and clarifies sound purposes.

The purposes of the school are wide and varied. Some are worthy; others are unimportant or even unworthy. Sometimes the purpose is to help a pupil over a difficulty; sometimes to widen his vision, help him see new horizons, and explore new ideas. Sometimes it is to help him see his own abilities and limitations, sometimes to help him understand his own community, or sometimes to help him become a better member of a family. Sometimes the purpose of the school is to give the pupils tools with which to solve problems and carry on their activities, that is, to help them learn to read, write, and spell satisfactorily, or to learn more about the social sciences, the physical sciences, mathematics, English, or some other language. Unfortunately, the chief purpose sometimes governing the work of the classroom is merely to cover another lesson in the textbook.

Are the Purposes of the School Clear?

Often purposes are not as useful as they should be. The elementary school is often preparing all its pupils for high school when few go to high school. The high school is preparing for college when less than one out of eight go to college. Sometimes the school's purpose is to prepare for a particular vocation for which the pupil isn't fitted or in which he may not be able to find a job.

Too often the school's purposes do not serve the greatest need; often they are vague and not clearly understood. You may have heard of the teacher who was asked what purposes the academic subject he taught served in the lives of boys and girls. After he had thought the matter over for twenty-four hours he came back with the report that he couldn't think of a single purpose it served that would justify the salary he was receiving from the public. While this is an extreme case it serves to illustrate the importance of making our purposes clearer and more effective. Are the purposes of your school clear to parents, board members, teachers, and pupils?

Usually when purposes are weak or wrong, it is because they have not been weighed and measured in the light of modern needs. They may be merely the result of accident or tradition rather than of careful thought. The wise procedure is to consider *what ought to be done and think thru carefully the purposes to be served*. The school is not likely to do its work well if it gets so wrapped up in the daily routine of work that it never stops to see what that work accomplishes in the lives of its boys and girls and in the life of its community.

Only when administrators, teachers, parents, schoolboard members, and even pupils have clear purposes in mind can the school move ahead most effectively and with assurance that it is making the most of its opportunities. Only then can there be some assurance that every activity of the school is directed to helping boys and girls to better living. Only then can there be dependable guideposts by which to judge the things that are being done. How does your community decide on the purposes toward which its school shall work?

Who Builds the Purposes of the School?

Many of the purposes of the school have come down to us thru the generations. They are so overlaid with the machinery, routine, and activities of the school that they are often hidden or forgotten or the school is not conscious that it is following them. For example, the old Latin Grammar School was founded in Boston in early days to prepare young men for Harvard, where they would study for the professions, particularly the ministry, medicine, and law. Today many subjects are taught chiefly to prepare young people for college, even tho, with the high-school enrolment of the United States almost doubling every ten years between 1890 and 1930, college is no longer the goal of most high-school pupils. It is clear that we cannot depend on purposes of past years alone.

The purposes of the school are determined in many ways by many people. The author of a textbook often more than anyone else decides the purpose of the course and of each lesson. National leaders and the reports of national commissions have a part. National organizations of agriculture, business, labor, or patriotic organizations take a strong interest in the school and strive to influence its work. Colleges and accrediting associations influence the high school. The purposes of a school depend a great deal on the way in which its teachers have been trained. The state education department and the state legislature have an important part. These are all influences outside of the local community.

The purposes of these groups are usually general or advisory. The final decision as to the purposes of the school rests primarily with the local community. It can decide whether it wants a school that follows old patterns because they served a previous generation or one whose purposes grow out of the current educational needs of the individual and the community. The board of education has final legal authority for many major decisions of purpose. Its purposes affect all of its actions in hiring teachers, buying supplies, building buildings, authorizing courses, and in the matters of school policy for which it must take responsibility. The actions of the board, however, are largely determined by the community. It is the whole community which consciously or unconsciously builds the purposes of the school. This can be done most effectively when there is full, free, and intelligent discussion of the purposes of the school, when there is no pressure to make some special decision like voting bonds for a new school building. Out of such discussions there should come a welding together of the thinking of the people of the community and a clarification of purposes which makes a vital difference in what actually goes on. ***Purposes have no meaning except as they live in the minds of people and affect people's thoughts and actions.***

How Can the Purposes of a School Be Built?

Our American schools are a crystallization of the hopes and aspirations of our pioneer forefathers who wanted to see their children and the following generations free from the shackles of ignorance. It is the concrete expression of their dreams for an enlightened nation. It is the product of the people who live in each community. Are these purposes growing and developing as the community changes? How has your community changed in the past ten years? How have the educational needs of pupils and adults changed? Have the purposes of the school grown and changed, or are they still guiding the school toward the kind of education the community needed fifteen or twenty-five years ago?

Only thru thoughtful, organized, intelligent, and continuous discussion by the community can the purposes of the school be kept alive and vital. There are different ways a discussion of the purposes of the school may be carried on. It may begin with a particular problem, with the needs of the pupils, with the general purposes of education, or with a study of the community and its particular educational needs. Where it begins will depend on the interest of the group.

Those using this chapter for discussion may wish to begin with the challenging problems presented in Part I. What can the school do about the goals for rural living discussed by Butterworth in the first chapter? How do these affect the policies of the schoolboard, the job of the superintendent, and the work of the faculty? Should they influence the work of the elementary teacher and the high-school teacher? Where do they belong in the curriculum? Should they be studied only in the social studies or should they have consideration in English, science, and other courses? Where should the questions of determining what is a satisfactory community, the relation of the school to other government agencies, the problem of organizing the community cooperatively, and other social problems discussed by Brunner be studied in school? Are Warren's questions on the general price level, the desirable size of a farm business, and the choice of the type of farm best suited to local conditions questions of concern only to boys preparing to make farming their lifework? If so these questions should be studied in vocational agricultural classes only. If they affect the welfare of every citizen in the community, and the very existence of the community itself, should they not also receive attention in courses where all pupils will have a chance to learn the things they need to know? Do the problems of income and taxation presented in Chapter 4 affect the welfare of individuals and communities sufficiently to receive the attention of high-school pupils and adult discussion groups? Are the great migrations of population described by Baker as important as the "westward migration" taught in most social studies classes? If so should they not receive equal attention?

Any group interested in clarifying the purposes of their school might well begin by discussing the question of how these problems could be studied in the elementary school, the high school, and by adults. This question could well be the main center of discussion or it can be raised constantly in considering the two main questions which follow: (1) What should the school do for individuals, and (2) What should the school do for the community as a whole?

PROBLEM 2. WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO FOR INDIVIDUALS?

Learning takes place only thru the individual pupil or adult. It is the habit he forms, the useful knowledge of himself and the world about him that he gathers, the hopes and aspirations he develops, the attitude toward life and his fellowmen that make him the future citizen who can do his part for democracy, who can lead a life worthwhile in itself and of service to his community and the world. What opportunities is he being given while in school to practice citizenship and work with others? How real are the problems that he must solve? How can the problems be a part of everyday life? What are some of these opportunities that every child should have a chance to experience?

What Kinds of Training Do Pupils Need?

The pioneer school prepared the child for a pioneer age by giving him tools with which to learn. It taught him to read, write, spell, and cipher.

These are even more important in modern life where they are used so much more every day than in the world of the frontier. However, any school today that teaches only these *tools* is in the same position as the employer who gives an untrained man a set of carpenter tools, an intricate factory machine, or a farm tractor but neglects to explain what they are for and how to use them. This worker has the tools but they are of little value to him without careful training in their purposes and practical use. He cannot use them for constructive purposes and may even harm himself and others. A person given only the tools of learning by the school may use them to destroy if he is not trained to use them for constructive purposes. A gangster is an asset neither to himself nor to society even if he is literate.

In pioneer days many of the most useful things a pupil needed to know were learned outside the school. He worked on the farm or in the store. He went with adults to church or to public meetings. He was a part of the life of the frontier and carried an important part of the work of the family and community. He usually spent his adult life in the kind of community in which he grew up. Today the situation is different. Half of the children raised on farms will go to the city to live. Our farms are producing twice as many youth for whom there is room while the cities are failing to produce enough youth to maintain their present population. If small communities are not to become poverty stricken thru overpopulation, and the cities weakened thru loss of population, this migration must continue. And it must continue in such a manner that those who will contribute most to building strong, virile, rural communities will remain in rural areas, and those best fitted to go to the cities will do so. At the same time those who remain in the rural areas must learn a great deal thru the school. The community of tomorrow will be quite different and much more complex than the community of yesterday. The storekeeper, banker, or farmer must meet complex problems his father never faced. He must have good training if he is to make the most of his opportunities. What kinds of education does your community provide?

What Kind of Persons Do Our Communities Need?

A community needs citizens who have sound minds and healthy bodies, and who can exercise self-control. It needs people who, when faced with new problems, can find intelligent ways of solving them, and who have not merely mastered the tool subjects of reading, writing, and arithmetic but who are also socially minded. Does your community need persons who are physically strong and fit, who are abundantly healthy? Does it need persons who are happy and secure and filled with the joy of living? Does it need persons who can think clearly, who can meet new situations with confidence and poise, and find new ways of doing things? Does it need persons who are able and willing to work with other people for the good of the whole group?

How Can the School Develop Socially Minded Individuals?[1]

Children are citizens of their own group here and now. They can best prepare for a full life worthwhile to themselves and of service to the community by living such a life in the present. They can best prepare for adult citizenship when they have opportunity to work together in groups for a common purpose where they will have to share materials, assume responsibilities, respect the rights of others, and learn how to share in making decisions. Children who have worked together well on saving wastepaper, gathering milkweed pods, collecting scrap metal, purchasing war stamps, and raising vegetables have learned some of the satisfactions of constructive effort toward the common good. The schools in which the children have helped beautify the school grounds, test the water supply, conserve the soil, repair farm machinery, remove hazards to health and safety, plan and serve hot lunches, and study the workings of local government have given children opportunities to develop social mindedness.

Children can learn about the peoples of the world in a vital way thru the Junior Red Cross, thru returning veterans, and probably best thru foreign-born residents of the district who tell them of their mother country, show them fine handwork, tell them folk stories, or teach them native songs.

How can your school help the child to learn better how to work and play with others, to do his share, assume responsibility, respect the rights of others, and share decisions? Are the children having a share in planning, carrying out, and evaluating activities that have a real purpose for them? Are they learning to compete with each other, or are they learning to cooperate in achieving common ends?

How Can Schools Develop Emotionally Balanced Persons

Healthy emotional stability is very important to a wholesome life. The school can be a place where pupils learn to work with others, to guide and control their emotions, to become a real part of the group in which they work. The teacher must have a sympathetic attitude and try to understand the cause of emotional disturbances. A good teacher will see that no child is constantly frustrated and that every child meets with a reasonable amount of success. A child who has difficulties with some parts of his work may be successful and useful in something else. For example, a child who is slow in reading comprehension may be able to make a real contribution to the group by drawing a picture to illustrate some phase of the work being discussed, or by constructing a stage or a miniature scene. For example, there is the child who made a spinning wheel out of an old wheel from a grain drill which he found at home and with this success his other work improved. Another average child who was failing in his work made a crayon drawing of a freight train on a long strip of wrapping paper. This was during a study of the small local paper mill, and the child's attitude toward the other children changed from resentment to cooperativeness and helpfulness. An indifferent high-school boy who was ready to drop out enrolled in a course in radio, became so interested that he finished high school, and later became an outstanding radio engineer. How can the school help pupils develop vital interests in which they can find pleasure and make some contribution to the group?

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[1] For discussion of health problems and what the schools can do about them see Problem 3, page 86.

Can children have a part in setting up their code of conduct in the classroom, on the playground, about the building, on the school bus, about the home, in the church, in the community recreation center, and elsewhere? The *United States Army Manual* in dealing with soldier discipline stresses control from within and emphasizes the importance of having the soldier know *why* orders are given. Is this true of children? Will they exercise more self-control if they think thru the problems of good conduct and agree on what are the proper things to do than if they are required to act in a certain way because they are ordered to do so by a person in authority? Can the children go about their work in an effective way when the teacher is not present?

Can the school help pupils develop high ideals which will govern their conduct? Do individuals need to feel that they have a part in something bigger than themselves, that they can do something worthwhile for others? How can the school develop sound loyalties to others, to the local community, to the nation, to the democratic way of life? Can the school help to develop spiritual strength? Can children learn to see the spiritual values in the life about them? How can the school help develop persons who are happy, who have abundant interests and rich experiences?

How Can the School Best Promote Mental Growth?

The child should build up thru his schoolwork a large fund of useful knowledge. This is the grist for his mill. It is even more important, however, that he learn how to use and apply this knowledge to the problems of life. The kind of knowledge he will need thru life is wide and varied. It will change from year to year as he grows older and as conditions change. It is thus vitally important that he be able to select the knowledge which will be most useful and that he know how to apply it to the solution of his problems. A miscellaneous fund of unrelated facts has little value except on a radio quiz program. Probably the best way to learn is to start with a problem in which the children are interested and for which they want to find the answer. They can then organize their work to arrive at the answer. How can your school go about this most effectively? What does a teacher need to know about pupils, their interests and abilities? How can the school discover and develop them? What is the difference between an educational program which is built on individual needs and one which puts all children thru the same routine? Do we want an elementary school which merely prepares for high school or a high school which only prepares for college or has the school more important purposes to serve? Can a curriculum which develops each individual pupil and prepares him for living do a good job of preparing for high school or college? What do all the children of the United States need to learn in order to have the common background and purposes necessary for a strong and unified nation?

PROBLEM 3. WHAT CAN RURAL EDUCATION DO TO IMPROVE HEALTH?

Many people think that the health of rural school children is one thing we should not have to worry about. Surrounded by fresh air and sunshine with nature's woods and fields for playgrounds, farms to provide varied and useful activities, and all that the soil can produce in the way of healthful foods, wouldn't it appear that rural children have almost as their natural right the essentials of a healthful existence? And wouldn't it be a case of "carrying coals to Newcastle" to set up a planned health program for rural school children?

Admitting that nature has provided bountifully in many respects for the health needs of our rural children, there still remains much that could and should be done. Any rural school that ignores its health problems and fails to set up a planned health program is missing one of its greatest opportunities to contribute to the development of a sturdy generation of young people. Fresh air and sunshine are free gifts of nature, but unless a real effort is made to utilize them, their benefits may be very easily lost or dissipated within the confines of stuffy homes and schoolrooms, to say nothing of the even more cramped school buses. The woods, fields, and streams may present a perennial invitation to hiking, swimming, and camping but rigid bus schedules, homework, and farm and house chores too often make acceptance of that invitation a rarity. And like shoemakers' children with holes in their shoes, the children of our food producers too often go without adequate well-chosen food in the busy schedule of the farm home that starts before dawn and is still not completed when darkness falls.

When we actually compare the physical condition of rural children with urban children we find very little reason for being complacent with the policy of leaving it to nature to provide automatically for the rural child's health. For the past twenty-five years repeated surveys have shown that tho rural and urban children fall heir to approximately the same number of physical defects, two or three apiece, the urban children get their defects remedied so much more promptly than do the rural children that in many school health surveys the rural children show consistently more remediable defects unremedied than do their urban cousins. Outranking all others in the list of these defects will be abnormalities of bones and joints, dental defects, defective vision, malnutrition, nasal obstruction, and abnormalities of tonsils. In some surveys it has been found that children in rural areas suffer a higher incidence of the acute infectious diseases of childhood during their school life than do children in some of our large cities. Health-habit surveys have too frequently revealed that the health habits of urban children with regard to eating, sleeping, exercising, caring for skin and teeth are of a higher order than are the health habits of comparable groups of rural children. Underlying the poor health habits in many instances are inadequate opportunities for healthful practices in the home due to the lack of running water, adequate plumbing, heating or lighting facilities, or proper sleeping space. Some of the communicable diseases are now actually showing a higher death rate in the rural areas than in the urban areas. Among these are typhoid fever, dysentery, whooping cough, and measles.

It would appear that as free as nature is with her gifts there is still a definite need in the rural schools for a health program which will stimulate interest in and point the way to improved sanitation, better health habits, and a higher level of medical care in the rural areas.

What Are the Essentials of a Health Program for the Rural Schools?

The first essential in such a program is a teacher who has enough knowledge of biology and of child growth and development to sense what the child's needs are, and to meet those needs hour by hour—facts here, questions there, encouragement to one, correction to another, periods of intense mental effort varied by periods of rest, physical activity, diversion, art, music, handwashing, luncheon.

Another essential is a cooperative relationship between home and school which will guarantee that what the child learns about health in school is not rendered impotent by inadequate facilities or unsympathetic attitudes in the home, and that what the child learns at school does not serve to make the child hypercritical of or impatient with the routines and practices of the home. An active parent-teacher association and a plan of home visiting by teachers and school visiting by parents are valuable devices in attaining this end.

The importance of a good school plant needs but little exposition. Clean, well-heated, well-lighted, comfortably furnished, and attractive schoolrooms with modern water supplies and plumbing facilities serve to protect children from eye strain, respiratory disease, constipation, and faulty posture as well as to instil in them the desire to have in their own home facilities that are at least as comfortable, as healthful, and as attractive. Centralized school buildings that make possible health rooms, showers, gymnasiums, science laboratories, and homemaking rooms are of undoubted value in the health program.

A definite plan of health supervision of the school children should include: morning inspection by the teacher with referral of questionable cases of communicable diseases to the school doctor, school nurse, public health nurse, or back to the home; continuous observation and monthly weighing of children by the teacher with individual study of selected cases and referral of questionable cases to school physician; a preadmission medical examination of each child performed by the child's private physician or the school physician with advice as to corrections given to parents; checking of smallpox, diphtheria, and whooping cough inoculations by the teacher at school entrance with advice as to immunizations given to parents; periodic testing of vision, hearing, motor ability, reaction to tuberculin and periodic chest photofluorographic examination by joint action of school physician, school or public health nurse, and teacher; follow-up by teacher or nurse of defects or diseases found in order to stimulate prompt correction or treatment.

Healthful school living requires that the following items be given due consideration: proper adjustment of seats, desks, and lighting to the needs of the individual pupil; proper adjustment of periods of mental activity, mental relaxation, and physical activity to the needs of the pupils; planning of morning inspections, relaxation periods, recess periods, and lunch periods to obtain their maximum health benefits and their maximum health educational outcomes.

Last, but by no means least, of the essentials in the health program is health teaching. If the on-going activities of the school day are planned with health education in mind, and if the opportunities for incidental health instruction in association with the daily health emergencies and happenings are effectively utilized, the amount of time which must be devoted to systematic class instruction in hygiene will not be large. It is obvious, however, that incidental health instruction, valuable as it is, when applied to a specific situation as it arises, cannot do justice to the subject of hygiene with its questions leading unavoidably back to the complex and ever-expanding fields of biology, bacteriology, anatomy, physiology, chemistry, and nutrition. A certain tho limited amount of systematic instruction in the structure and functioning of the various systems of the body, in what we can do to keep those systems functioning normally, and in what we can do to prevent and minimize infection would seem to be absolutely essential. And for rural children in the postwar world the following items would appear to have special value and significance: the ways of providing a sanitary water supply for a farm home, modern methods of sewage disposal for rural areas, modern devices for combating insect pests, effective methods of food preservation, the need for the organization of prepaid plans of insurance for hospital and medical care, and the need for efficient organization of public health services.

Should the Schools Provide Medical Care?

The fact that the public school brings together all or most of the children of the community leads some people to the conclusion that the school is the place to apply to the whole child group various medical measures including immunization, dental repair, eye fittings, skin treatments, and even tonsillectomies and other necessary operations. The wisdom of this policy is seriously doubted. The primary function of the public school is education, not medical treatment. Our school authorities are chosen for their training and ability in education, not in medicine, and they should not be required or expected to administer complex programs of medical care. Much more sensible would appear to be the plan of providing a program of health supervision in the school as outlined above, but leaving the actual medical treatment of diseases or defects to the hospitals and clinics, the medical specialists, and the private practitioners of medicine.

Should the Schools Provide Annual Physical Examinations for Pupils?

A child may be handicapped in his educational development because of some physical defect such as poor vision, diseased tonsils, impaired hearing, rheumatic heart, or various other ailments. Many of these defects can be discovered only thru a medical examination. Can schools provide for an adequate annual physical examination for every child with recommendations to parents to consult the family physician when defects are discovered? Could the school doctor and school nurse give a more efficient medical examination if they examined one-third of the pupils in the schools each year? Will parents in rural districts become sufficiently aware of the need of physical examinations so that they can be depended upon to take their children to private physicians for these examinations? If so, the school situation need be used only for the application of the various methods of group testing of vision, hearing, and motor ability. The earlier the physical defects are discovered and corrected the more efficiently the work of the schools can be carried on and the greater is the opportunity of pupils to develop into the most desirable type of citizens.

How Can the School Health Program Be Administered?

There is no simple panacea for improving the health program in our rural schools but many interesting and promising experiments are being tried. In some areas consolidation of districts and the pooling of district funds have made it possible to provide special health teachers or health counselors and improved facilities for health and recreation. In some areas thru the joint support of the county Red Cross chapter and the state education department, health education supervisors (or general education supervisors with special health educational qualifications) have been provided. These supervisors, working under the county superintendents, visit the rural schools, aid the teachers in the development of sound health programs and health teaching projects, and make available new health teaching materials.

Can the School Improve Community Health?

Tho there is obvious danger that any school may be unwisely used as a propaganda center for disseminating untried or half-tried social ideas and for initiating poorly considered social experiments, it must nevertheless assume its share of the responsibility for community improvement thru carefully considered social experiment. And in the field of health there can be no doubt that three social experiments of great significance have been frequently tried with success and now have the approval of our public health and medical authorities.

The first of these social experiments is that of setting up the rural county as the local health administrative unit. The advantages of abandoning the village and township limits of horse and buggy days and setting up a county health unit with a full-time county health officer and nurses and a forward-looking, six-point public health program are obvious. But it is also obvious that any such change carries with it certain disadvantages. Before any such change is voted all the advantages should be measured against the disadvantages. The school is perhaps the ideal place for analyzing both sides of the question. Among the questions to be asked are: Would the community get more public health service by forming a county health unit? Would the costs be increased? How much would the state contribute to the scheme? Would there be danger of unhealthy domination of the county health unit by the state health department? Would it mean that the village and town health officers' positions might cease to exist? If local practitioners were no longer the local health officers, would they find their rural practice even less attractive than before and seek an urban practice? Would the public health nurses act as school nurses too? How would the school physician's work be correlated with the public health work of the county? What are the advantages and disadvantages of state-supported state health districts as compared with state-subsidized, locally-administered county health units? What has been the experience in the more than 1800 counties which now have full-time public health service?

The second of these social experiments is the organization of county or district hospitals so that hospital care, nursing care, laboratory service, and X-ray service are made available to rural dwellers at a cost they can afford. Important questions relating to this problem include: If rural counties, not containing cities, build, equip, and maintain their hospitals, should the state be expected to provide a part of the necessary funds? If rural communities had good hospitals, even tho small, would young, well-trained physicians hesitate so often to settle in those communities and establish their practices there? Can the costs of modern hospital care be met by the ordinary farm family without some system of hospital insurance to spread the costs? What is the cost of hospital insurance where it is functioning successfully? How successful has been the experience of the more than seventy-seven Blue Cross plans of hospital insurance and what advantages do the more than seventeen million people in this country, who have some form of hospital insurance, see in the plan of prepaying their hospital expenses?

The third social experiment is that of voluntary nonprofit prepayment for medical care. That some device for spreading the costs of medical care and paying for it when we are in good health and on our regular income has long been apparent. The administrative organization which could make this possible is still in the process of evolution. The legislators seem agreed that some plan of health insurance must be promptly and widely developed. The medical profession is agreed that insurance plans are necessary but it is unanimous in opposing compulsory health insurance and in advocating some form of voluntary nonprofit prepayment of medical care. Many of the state medical societies are now actively attempting to promote some form of medical care insurance. Would a study of the commonly suggested plans make a worthwhile unit of work in a rural school? Some of the questions that will arise in such studies are: Should hospital insurance and medical care insurance be separated or combined? What will be the cost of medical care insurance as compared with hospital insurance? Should the medical care insurance attempt to cover all medical costs or only those for major illnesses, operations, and so forth? What are the main reasons why the medical profession is opposed to government-run compulsory medical care insurance? Can one have prepaid medical care and still maintain free choice of his physician? Whose duty is it to initiate the development of plans for the prepayment of medical care? How has the California Physicians' Service met the needs of its more than 88,000 subscribers? How successfully has the Michigan Medical Service plan operated? How well has the Hamilton County, Nebraska, cooperative health insurance plan worked?

PROBLEM 4. HOW CAN THE NECESSARY GUIDANCE BE GIVEN?

In pioneer days the parents were responsible for most of the guidance their children received. This guidance was absorbed thru the daily life. The children followed in their parents' footsteps and gradually learned as they grew up the things they needed to know in order to make sound decisions. Children did not have the difficulty in deciding what occupation to follow that they now have. There were relatively few occupations and the difference between occupations was not as great as it is today. From a smaller number of less specialized occupations, industrialization has now created a situation in which there are over 20,000 different occupations from which each child must choose his lifework. These occupations vary from those commonly found in almost any community to the highly specialized occupations about which few people know. Did you know that there is an occupation called arachnology which employs several highly trained specialists whose sole job is to study the life of the spider? Did you ever hear of the following occupations: anesthetist, cartographer, dermatologist, dental hygienist, linguist, photoengraver, comparative shopper, salvage engineer, toxicologist, ornithologist, bibliographer, glazier, compositor, epidemiologist, geodesist, puppeteer, pedodontist, ceramic engineer, stylist, occupational therapist? How many of the 20,000 occupations can you name? It is a big job to help youth find the right occupation out of all these 20,000 different possibilities.

Surely there is an important occupation awaiting each individual which is adapted to his particular abilities. The problem is to be sure that the individual finds this job, and it is not even as simple as this because most individuals work at several different occupations during a lifetime. Each person, then, must have the guidance and training which will give him the broad background necessary to go into the occupation which seems most desirable, and at the same time fit him to change when new inventions, discoveries, or other conditions make change necessary.

The situation is even more complex since guidance must be given thruout life. Even tho an individual remains in the same occupation he must constantly be readjusting to new developments. For example, in agriculture, the farmer of fifty years ago, who used horsepower and hand labor in dealing with virgin soil and in producing a large part of his food for home consumption, faced an entirely different situation than the farmer today who must use modern machinery, tractors, commercial fertilizer, and plan his production for the fluctuating demands of the commercial market.

Who Gives Guidance?

Guidance is given in all sorts of ways. The parents have the major responsibility for giving guidance. Every teacher gives a certain amount of guidance to the pupils, not only with regard to occupations, but in matters of and adjustments to everyday life. People give each other guidance. For example, in one mountain community an old man, "Uncle Billy," who was particularly interested in the children, gave a great deal of fine guidance in his confidential talks with them.

Often the person who is working at an occupation can help give guidance more than anyone else. Some schools have developed a cooperative part-time program with the help of farmers, bankers, lawyers, doctors, social workers, teachers, librarians, storekeepers, produce dealers, and others. The high-school children work several hours a week at a job and spend a certain amount of time at school discussing their experiences and studying ways in which they can be more efficient. This type of organized guidance by the school and community gives pupils a chance to develop a real understanding of what an occupation means and how it is carried on. They see what kind of work is done, feel the atmosphere of the situation in which the job is carried on, and experience the actual process of doing the job. This may be an effective method of guidance. However, with all of the resources which a community can provide for guiding boys and girls, these resources cannot be most effectively used and developed unless there is a professional guidance worker available who can make the most of the opportunities which exist.

What Does Guidance Mean?

Is guidance deciding things for people, or is it helping people to make their own decisions? This question must be answered before any sound program of guidance can be developed. If an individual has all his decisions made for him, he does not develop the information, the methods, and the confidence necessary to make his own decisions. On the other hand, if he does not have the information necessary to make sound decisions, and does not learn the methods by which a sound decision is reached, he cannot succeed. The National Vocational Guidance Association has defined vocational guidance as: "the process of *assisting* an individual to choose, prepare for, enter upon, and progress in, an occupation." This means making available to an individual the necessary information regarding occupations and helping him to learn how to analyze and use it to *solve his own* problems.

What Information Do the Youth of a Rural Community Need?

The kind of information needed will of course depend on the kind of community in which they live, the kind of occupations provided in the local labor market, and the kinds of communities to which they are likely to move. We know that in the United States as a whole over 23 percent of all the jobs are in manufacturing, nearly 19 percent in agriculture, and over 16 percent in wholesale and retail trades. These are the "Big 3" groups of jobs in which most of the gainfully employed workers of the United States make their living. If a youth wants to get a job he should think seriously about the jobs most available.

We know, too, that in the United States as a whole something like half of the youth who grow up on farms will need to find a job somewhere else because there will not be room for them on the farm without overcrowding agriculture, which would eventually destroy it. We know, too, that something like half of those who remain on the farm will devote their full time to agriculture, while something like half will secure part of their income from other sources. Most of these other sources are working for other farmers or doing part-time work about the community or working in a small factory near by.

Should not the local community make a survey to find out what occupations are available locally? This can be done thru the federal census which gives information on the number of gainfully employed on different occupations, thru the county agricultural agent, thru the local chamber of commerce, and if available, thru the local office of the U. S. Employment Service.

The high school in Fairfield, Maine, made a careful study of the graduates during the last five years and found they were in a wide variety of occupations and often a long distance away. The addresses of these students were secured thru friends, neighbors, family, and the local postmaster. We can find many examples of schools that are not adjusting their curriculum to train for the jobs available. Before the war created thousands of new positions in stenography, one high school was graduating thirty-five stenographers each year when there were only three positions in the whole community employing stenographers, and these positions did not require new candidates each year. At the same time other communities were training larger groups than were needed so that graduates of these schools had to go elsewhere for jobs.

What Information Is Needed About Requirements for Jobs?

What does a pupil need to know about becoming a welder, a farmer, or a lawyer? Some of the questions he will need to answer are: What kind of a person makes a good welder? What traits should a person have in order to become efficient in this occupation? What kind of training is needed? How long will this training take? How much will it cost? How can he finance himself until he is trained and able to earn? Where can he get the best possible training? Where is he most likely to get a job after he becomes trained? What will be the conditions of work on the job? How far can he go in advancement in the field? This same information is needed in entering any other occupation.

In an occupation like farming or running a store, he has the additional problem of how to finance himself in order to get a start.

What Does a Pupil Need to Know About Himself?

How can he find out whether he can take responsibility, whether he is honest and dependable, whether he would make a steady worker, whether his personal appearance is attractive, whether he can meet people, whether he has a bent for a particular type of work and what he is really interested in, whether he has enough courage and persistence to follow thru as a particular job will require.

Is provision being made in your community to help pupils discover this information about themselves which they need? Is the school, for example, keeping records which will help the pupil to understand himself and make intelligent decisions? Should such records include books that children read, offices which they have held, committees on which they have served, and information of this kind which will indicate their ability to work with others and their attitudes toward other people, the work they do during vacation, their hobbies, the things they do to help their parents, the things they like to do, their successes or failures in their schoolwork, physical health, and emotional stability.

How Can the School Give Guidance?

Should every teacher give guidance or should it be left only to a specialist? Probably this question does not need discussion, since every teacher does give guidance, whether intentionally or not. It seems difficult to think of a sound guidance program without having each teacher doing his or her part. This means that each teacher needs some training in guidance and needs to think purposefully of how he can be of greatest help to pupils in getting the necessary information, and needs to learn how to go about the solution of their problems. However, it is quite clear that a specialist with thoro training is needed if teachers are to give the best possible guidance. They cannot possibly keep up with changes which are constantly taking place in vocational needs of a community and in the demand for workers of a particular type. No teacher can keep up with all of the requirements for entering each of the 20,000 occupations. It seems very clear that we must find some way by which a competent guidance worker can supervise and stimulate the guidance program in every rural community. How can this be done?

Can Our Community Have a Competent, Trained Guidance Worker?

There is no reason why every community and every rural child in the United States cannot have the benefits of the services of a trained guidance worker. This can be done at a very reasonable per capita cost if a group of communities cooperatively employ an able guidance counselor. Rockland County, New York, for example, employs a guidance counselor who serves all the schools, from one-room schools to city schools. He helps study the labor market, finds out about job possibilities, helps teachers with guidance courses, supplies both teachers and pupils with guidance information, and assists them in how to use it most effectively. Could your county, or maybe several counties together, employ such a guidance worker?

PROBLEM 5. HOW CAN THE SCHOOL EDUCATE CONSUMERS?

It is generally believed that the school should help students become wise consumers, yet not all schools provide the learning experiences which lead to this goal. Suppose Johnny spends his money for ice cream when he goes to town, and comes home without the paper and pencils that he needs for school. James leaves in a library book the check which he received for the pig he sold. Helen washes her flowered scarf in hard water and strong soap and presses it carelessly or not at all. What activities can the school provide which will help these children learn to select wisely, to buy with skill, and to use carefully the goods and services available to them? Help them handle money? Do their part in improving the economic system thru which life's goods and services are made available? Following are some of the consumer problems which the school can help children learn to solve.

What Goals in Life Are Wise, What Foolish?

Each young person has only so much time, energy, and money at his command. He can plan ahead for a start in life, a college education, or a trip; he can weigh his wants and desires and select on the basis of real value, thus making life rich and useful for himself and others; or, he can follow the line of least resistance or immediate pleasure, dawdle away his time without purpose, or waste his energy on silly parties and his money on "cokes," frills, and other things of temporary or negative value. Wise guidance in planning ahead; opportunities to choose and to profit from the choice, whether it be wise or foolish; interesting worthwhile things to do which compete with the worthless—these are some of the ways in which the modern rural school helps its students to establish a sense of values and to act in accordance with carefully thought-out plans as far ahead as each one can be helped to see.

How Can Students Make the Most of Noncash Resources?

A rural family has resources for good living that cost little or no money. In fact, the farm family that gets along best is the one that has used its noncash income to greatest advantage. On the farm excellent food can be had at little cost. A country garden can be made to furnish vegetables and fruit for the year around. Chickens and poultry can be raised. Other resources are varied and rich: simple rural material and handicrafts, more appropriate for the country home than expensive commercial decorations; swimming, skating, horseback riding; plenty of space for games such as tennis, croquet, baseball; wild flowers and birds, rocks, minerals, and animals for special interests and hobbies.

The school and home can work together to help each child make the most of the noncash resources afforded by his own farm. Such instruction can be fitted into home economics and agriculture courses, classes in handicrafts and art, or school club work, and the home thru wholehearted cooperation can make the work rich and practical. The community can do much to utilize local resources in becoming a good place in which its young people may be initiated into the pleasures and obligations of adulthood.

How Can a Country Child Have an Income of His Own?

Can country children be helped to build incomes? Can they be taught how to manage their money efficiently? How can the school and home give such instruction? These are problems related to cash income, and cooperation of school and home is required for their solution.

The cash income of the farm family is different from that of the family in the city. It comes thru production rather than labor, and is received whenever crop or livestock is sold. The city man's income as a rule is regular and certain. The farmer's income is irregular and uncertain. This means that it is hard for the farmer to give his son a regular allowance. It also means that the farm boy who is going to remain on the farm will take up a life of uncertain rather than regular income. Consequently that is the kind of income he needs to be educated to build and to use. The school should help him. Four-H clubs and Future Farmers of America encourage production projects which can become sources of income comparable to the farm family's crop and livestock income. The school can encourage more and more students to utilize production projects in learning income management. In class instruction and extracurriculum activities, students can be helped to keep account of expenditures and receipts; to make plans for their spending. They can learn how to use banks and checks and study different forms of investment which might be practical for them to use at present, at the same time that desirable emphasis is placed on extension and modification of production projects as a chief means of investment and reinvestment for the farm person.

What is our school doing to help children learn to manage money? Can or should the children have farm production projects, such as raising pigs or calves or poultry? Are there cooperative ventures such as a hot school lunch or recreation program managed by pupils that may provide opportunities to learn money management from firsthand and cooperative experience? These are some of the questions by which teachers and parents should rate the value of their school to young consumers.

What Can Be Taught About Budgeting and Buying and Using Goods?

A country child needs help to make a plan for his spending and to follow it, making the necessary adaptations to changing circumstances. His money accounts will be more involved than those of the city child, because he will have expenditures for his production project and income from it to add to the complexity of his records from time to time.

Many rural children need more opportunities to buy for themselves. They buy candy, lunch, school supplies. They may buy feed and seed in connection with their agricultural projects. They can buy for their parents. With proper guidance from school and home combined, they might be given the money which is now spent for their clothes and allowed to buy their clothes themselves. They will make mistakes, of course, and will have to learn from these. With study and good planning, they can sometimes save something from that given them for clothes to use for purchases of their own planning and choosing. Pupil-teacher management of the school lunch gives children experiences in buying foods.

It is important for the rural purchaser to have certain types of skills. He should know where to get the facts he needs to judge his purchases before buying. He should know where and how to secure the many excellent bulletins available to him thru government sources and private agencies. He should learn to order wisely by mail and how to use mail-order catalogs. He should learn buying guides for consumers, seed catalogs, lists of certified seeds, and farm-equipment and supply pamphlets for information and comparison. He should learn to read labels and guarantees and understand their limitations and use; to know how to approach a clerk and ask the kind of questions to get the facts he needs.

How Can Children Develop Economic Understanding?

How can we prepare pupils to assume their present and future responsibility for improving the rural economic situation and thereby the economic stability of the nation? How can we teach them to husband the nation's natural resources entrusted to them? We cannot expect children to project themselves into a future which to them is so far ahead and so vague that it seems to have little connection with their present experiences and problems. Some economic problems of this nature are beyond the scope of the rural elementary and secondary school. On the other hand, there are ways to relate many economic problems to children's present experiences. The lives of rural children are set in the closest of contacts with economic problems which determine the amount and kind of food they have to eat, the quality of their clothes, the comfort and beauty of their homes. Surely rural children can begin to study some of these problems and learn to do something to solve them.

For example, suppose a rural young person cannot have the new suit for which he has hoped, because the price of wheat has fallen. Is this not the time for the school or home to help him understand what determines the price which a farmer gets for his wheat? His corn? His hogs? The ratio of corn to pork? The relation of farm income to national prosperity?

In agriculture class or a current problems group, students can discuss and act upon questions like these: What can we do to learn about the market situation? What reliable sources of economic information are available for farmers? How can the farm organization in our community influence the making of laws in this country in such a way that the welfare of all groups will be served? Can young people have a part in this now? Can students in school arouse a local organization to study vital problems and write to their representatives in Congress? What can high-school students do about an economic situation that forces a child in the first grade to lunch on a boiled potato and a piece of salt pork?

These five major problems in consumer education for rural children and young people suggest major goals. The experiences which any child can have in achieving the goals implied depend upon the standards of living in the community, the imagination and skill of the teachers, and the flexibility and practicability of the school program.

PROBLEM 6. HOW CAN THE RURAL SCHOOLS EDUCATE PRODUCERS?

This question resurrects the old controversy of vocational versus general education. There are those who still hold that schools should educate for life rather than for making a living. A majority of thinking people, however, believe that it is not an "either-or" decision that has to be made between vocational and general education. Both are essential just as both protein and carbohydrates are essential in the ration of a dairy cow. The only question is one of deciding upon the proper balance.

Vocational education increases the amount and quality of work which a person can perform because it increases his ability and skill. A large amount of useful consumer goods and a large amount of essential services are required for the maintenance of a high national income and a high standard of living. If the masses of the people are to be adequately fed, housed, clothed, and educated, and are provided with essential health and recreational services, there will be need for a large amount of ability and skill on the part of workers in many fields of endeavor. It may be that increased efficiency will make a shorter work-week possible, but all golden ages in great civilizations have been based upon leisure time rightly used. Vocational education is also needed as a means of conserving our human and natural resources. It is needed as a means of providing national strength in peace and in war. It is a means by which education is democratized so that the farmer, the homemaker, and the tradesman get training for their work at public expense the same as do the lawyer, the dentist, and the physician.

What Organization of Rural Education Is Needed?

Many rural school administrative and attendance units are too small to provide vocational education except at a great expense per student. A high school of less than fifty pupils should not attempt to offer any vocational work whatever. As the school becomes larger it is possible to offer more and more vocational work.

The organization for vocational education in rural communities should not be regarded as belonging wholly to the day classes in high school. Part-time classes for out-of-school youth and evening classes for adults are essential parts of the vocational program.

This is not the place to discuss the reorganization of administrative and attendance units since it has been done elsewhere. However, one proposal for providing opportunities for vocational training seems in order. The proposal is that in every state there be set up one or more area vocational schools. These schools would provide vocational-technical education of less than college grade in the fields that those who administer the schools find are needed. Area vocational schools in some states are financed and supervised by the state. In some states that are contemplating the organization of such schools, the plan is to designate existing public schools offering vocational work as area vocational schools. Students attending these schools would have their tuition and a part, if not all, of their transportation paid by the state.

The area vocational school offers a solution to the problem of providing certain kinds of vocational education for youth and adults living in the open country and in rural towns and villages. The need for these schools serving larger units of territory is of two kinds: (1) making vocational preparation available to pupils from areas in which the local high school is too small or otherwise inadequate in facilities and in program to satisfy their needs; (2) providing opportunity for a more highly specialized and frequently a more advanced preparation than is practicable in the vocational offerings of the local high school.

There is no conflict anticipated in this proposal with already existing vocational programs in local schools. There are some kinds of vocational preparation that can be given best in the local community high school. In general this will be preparation for those occupations found in the immediate area thereby offering opportunity for supervised work experience and subsequent occupational placement. Preparation for occupations on the farm, in the home, and in local business and industrial establishments may well be begun, if not completed, in the local school. Where there is need for advanced preparation of less than college grade, or where the preparation is for occupations not found locally, and where the local enrolment is insufficient to justify the offering economically, the larger administrative unit offers a solution.[2]

In What Fields Can Rural Schools Educate Producers?

Vocational education cannot be given effectively to pupils of elementary school age. The rural elementary schools, among which the one-teacher schools predominate, may give prevocational courses in general agriculture, general home economics, and industrial arts. This training, however, should not be confused with work in these fields that is taught on a vocational level.

The rural high school of one hundred students or more can give effective work in home economics. If a rural high school enrols as many as twenty-five farm boys who are interested in vocational agriculture, that subject may also be offered. It is doubtful if commercial work should be offered in high schools of less than one hundred students. A comprehensive program of trade and industrial education can be carried on effectively only in a large high school and in an industrial community. Rural high schools, as a rule, do not meet these requirements and, therefore, cannot take care of the educational needs of rural young people in this field. It is for these young people that the area vocational school is most needed. Some work in trades and industries can be given, however, in the cooperative part-time diversified occupations program. Teacher-training courses are offered in rural high schools in a few states, but this work has risen above the high-school level and the sooner high schools drop this work the better it will be generally.

The several fields of vocational education which may be carried on by the rural schools are discussed briefly in the paragraphs of this section which follow.

What Should Be Offered in Vocational Agriculture?

Vocational education in agriculture as carried on under the provisions of the Smith-Hughes Act and subsequent supporting legislation is, generally speaking, by far the most effective type of agriculture taught in the public schools of the nation. As Warren points out in Chapter 3, the problems today in making farming pay require an occupational efficiency much greater than that needed by past generations of farmers. Vocational education in agriculture is aiding present and prospective farmers to solve their problems thru regular day-school classes in agriculture. Such classes can and should be a part of the local high-school program, since the opportunity for supervised participation, so essential in the preparation, can be obtained on the home farms of the pupils.

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[2] For a thoro discussion of the proposal of larger administrative units for vocational education, see *An Enlarged Program of Vocational Education with Special Reference to Larger Administrative Units.* Washington, D. C.: American Vocational Association, 1943.

In addition to the day-school classes in agriculture, it would be well for rural high schools, whenever possible, to offer part-time classes in agriculture for out-of-school farm youth and evening classes for adult farmers. The part-time classes are usually most successful when they cover some definite unit of a subject and meet about twenty-four times in the slack season during the late fall and winter months. Adult evening schools are usually most successful when they, likewise, cover a definite unit of a subject and meet during the slack season. The evening classes, however, usually meet for only ten to fifteen times during the year. Both part-time and evening classes are most successful when the units selected for study are vital to the needs of those attending and when they are taught by the problem-discussion method rather than by lecturing.

In Chapter 5, Baker and Taeuber refer to the growth of more and better professional services to farmers. Some of these services can be performed by persons with less than college training who have appropriate rural background. While the local school may not be expected to have either the facilities or sufficient enrolment to justify offering preparation for such fields of work as servicing farm machinery and home appliances and dairy herd testing, agricultural agents or field men for commercial concerns and employees of agricultural cooperatives, regional or area schools, may be expected to prepare for these occupational opportunities. The location of such schools and their curriculum should be in keeping with the occupational opportunities in the areas being served, the opportunities for participative experience as a part of the training, and the number of pupils to be served. While some of these schools may prepare only for agricultural occupations, others, and perhaps the majority, may offer preparation in trade and industrial occupations, home economics, and commercial fields as well.

What Should Be Offered in Commercial Subjects?

Many rural high schools have attempted to offer commercial work that was beyond their capacity to do well. The small rural high schools would ordinarily be well advised not to offer any commercial work excepting personal typing and simple bookkeeping. Larger high schools may properly add business typing, shorthand, advanced bookkeeping, commercial law, and business arithmetic.

The George-Deen Act provides federal aid for courses in distributive education. Retail selling is probably the most important subject in this field, and many larger rural high schools may find this subject, together with related subjects, adapted to their needs.

What Should Be Offered in Trade and Industrial Training?

There are so many trades and industries that it is almost impossible for the small rural school to offer work in all those for which there is a demand. The plan known as the "Cooperative Part-Time Diversified Occupations Program," however, provides a means by which some work in trades and industries and commercial occupations may be done in the smaller schools.

The program may be described briefly as follows: High-school pupils of employable age spend half of each day in school and the other half in actual employment in their chosen trades or occupations. Thus they secure practical instruction on the job under the direction of skilled workmen. Someone from the school supervises the program to see that the instruction is carried on according to acceptable methods and that the student is not exploited. Two periods of the time spent in school are given to the study of technical and related subjects that are pertinent to the trades or occupations in which the students are engaged. The technical subjects are approved by a craft or occupational committee and are usually taught on an individual basis. The related subjects are taught on a group basis and usually include some of the social studies. The remaining school time is given to the study of regular academic subjects.

The pupils included in the cooperative part-time diversified occupations program are usually high-school juniors and seniors, but other boys and girls sixteen years of age and over who can profit from the training are not excluded.

What Use Can Be Made of Supervised Correspondence Courses?

Supervised correspondence courses are approved by leaders in the fields of vocational and rural education. Colleges and universities, as well as privately owned correspondence schools, have offered correspondence courses for over fifty years. The use of these courses in the high schools of the nation is a more recent development.

In 1923 a program of supervised correspondence instruction to provide vocationally useful training that could not be offered by the regular school staff was developed by Sidney C. Mitchell, superintendent of schools at Benton Harbor, Michigan. The plan proved successful, and adaptations of it have been made by several universities, state departments of public instruction, and by many individual schools as well as by a number of colleges.

Supervised correspondence instruction is not intended to take the place of qualified teachers, but it has a use in providing vocational training in courses that are elected by only a few students. Some teacher in the school supervises the work of the student. As a rule, the public school bears the tuition cost for the student.

Public-school authorities who wish to provide correspondence instruction for their students should exercise care in selecting courses only from reputable institutions.

PROBLEM 7. HOW CAN THE SCHOOLS BUILD BETTER COMMUNITIES?

In every decade the population of the United States has been increasing rapidly. This probably accounts for the fact that we have so often assumed that the *bigger* a community the *better* it is. Now that any population increase will be very slow, except in a few areas of unusual developments, we are rapidly reaching adulthood as a nation. This has helped us to realize that *bigger* and *better* are not the same thing. Today we know that size does not determine quality and that in many ways the small community is the best place to live. In the last analysis the quality of a community depends on its citizens. Its quality depends on their efforts in building it locally and their intelligent participation in deciding state and national policies which affect its welfare. America cannot build its communities from the outside. They must be built from within by their own citizens and these citizens must be trained for the job. How can we build better small communities? This raises the questions: What is a good community? What characteristics make a community a good place to live?

Before attacking these questions it might be well to ask: What are the responsibilities of America's small communities? What is the part they must play in our modern civilization if America is to make its greatest contribution to the life of the world? How can our small communities help preserve and build democracy in the years ahead? The functions of our small communities in the modern world might be stated as follows: (1) to provide its own people with a healthy, wholesome, satisfactory way of life; (2) to supply civilization with food, fiber, and manufactured products; (3) to provide a large part of our future population for both city and country; (4) to provide a market for the products and services of modern industry; and (5) to act as a stabilizer for modern society. What is the part your community should play in meeting these responsibilities?

Many outside forces affect the life of a community but they may affect two different communities in the same way but with very different results. One is good and the other is weak and an undesirable place to live. Much of the quality of a community depends on the attitude of the people toward their problems. If they are satisfied and indifferent it may be because the present situation is all right, but bodes ill for the future if it is because the people have given up and have tried to escape their responsibilities. How can we understand the community better so that it will make the best use of its natural resources and the abilities of its people? How can we build a community that has strong, live organizations for doing the things the people of a community can do together to make it a finer place in which to live? How can we bring into community life the art, literature, and music that people want and often feel can be found only in a city? How can the school educate intelligent producers and consumers?

The qualities of a community are likely to vary with the region, the climate, the soil, the historical traditions. the needs, and desires of the people. Its future possibilities will depend on how it is using its natural resources and the extent to which it is exhausting them. It may depend upon how the community meets changes caused by highways, upon the demand for a product it manufactures, upon the disappearance of the underground water supply, or upon public policies with regard to such matters as irrigation and the use of land. How can the school give pupils the training they need to be better local citizens? Chapter 1, "Goals for Rural Living," and Chapter 2, "Major Social Problems Affecting Education in Rural Areas," should be particularly helpful in discussing these community problems.

Chapter 7

Attracting and Holding Competent Teachers

PROBLEM 8. WHAT IS A COMPETENT TEACHER?

MANY attempts have been made to measure teaching competences but most of them have been disappointing. In the past, leaders in rural education frequently used as criteria to measure the competency of teachers preparation for teaching as measured by years, experience, age, and salary. The studies using these criteria usually concluded by ranking the rural teacher lowest of all the teachers in the United States. In fact, as the studies are examined a sort of circle emerges: rural teachers were poorly paid because they were young, inexperienced, and poorly educated; but they were poorly educated, young, and inexperienced because they were poorly paid, and so on. The result was that everybody involved in the difficulty—rural teachers, parents, and children alike—felt inferior. These feelings of inferiority were bad enough but they resulted in unfortunate types of behavior on the part of rural teachers. One of the most troublesome of these was that teachers left rural schools for city schools in large numbers as they became better educated, or they abandoned the teaching profession altogether as they became dissatisfied.

Another group of educational leaders attempted to measure teaching competency in terms of accomplishment. The work of teachers, in all possible situations and relationships, was examined and broken down into lists of activities. The assumption here was that if a prospective teacher successfully performed certain tasks he would acquire competency in the process. The difficulty with this scheme was that teacher competency did not always follow participation. One of the evidences of the breakdown in such criteria was that teachers could "break all the rules" in professional education and yet make acceptable successes in the classroom and in the communities.

One of the chief difficulties in the establishment of teaching competences, in all methods so far used, is that conclusions are reached in terms of the average teacher, and the qualities thus established are, presumably, universally acceptable. These conclusions, however, are apparently contrary to the facts. They fail to take into consideration that many types of teacher competences exist and not one. A teacher competent in a large city system conceivably might not attain competency in a small rural school. Likewise, a teacher acceptable in a rural school in the South might not meet the requirements of a small community in the Midwest and vice versa. In other words, the social milieu and the local culture in which the school is located are both important and they cannot be ignored in any discussion of the competency of teachers.

The question originally raised in this discussion, therefore, cannot be answered unless the answer comes from the people who cooperate in a program of child development in a local community. This cooperation, of course, involves many people—parents, supervisors, school nurses and doctors, 4-H club leaders, and many others. The question of teacher competency, therefore, is one that local community groups might profitably discuss in the light of their own educational needs and resources. Indeed it would be a very healthy thing, if all over the United States local groups could address themselves to the following question: So far as our own needs are concerned, what is a competent teacher? The answers to this question would be as varied and as many as there are communities that ask it. However, each community ought to be able to find a satisfactory answer for itself. In spite of the variations in answers to the above question there might be agreement on certain areas in which it is generally held that all teachers need competence.

For example, nearly all people agree that teachers must be well educated. What constitutes a well-educated person provides grounds for debate but here again there seems rather general agreement that a minimum of four years of college should be required before an applicant is certificated to teach in any school. During the present war emergency when temporary licenses are being issued by the thousands, the goal set above may seem too far beyond the reach of rural teachers. However, considerable progress had been made before the war in the attainment of a minimum standard of education four years beyond the high school for all teachers whether or not they taught in urban or rural, elementary or high schools. Minimum standards in education were rising steadily prior to the war for all states and at about the average of one additional year of preparation for each decade. In 1940 nine states—Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Indiana, Louisiana, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island—reported that a minimum of four years of college had been made a requirement for certification. Five other states—New York, Ohio, Utah, Virginia, and Washington—reported the above goal would be reached by them before the close of 1942. According to a recent study made in typical states by the U. S. Office of Education the minimum level of teacher preparation, prior to the war, had reached nearly three years college education for elementary teachers and four years for high-school teachers.[1] These advances represent heartening progress. In some states, notably New York, requirements for teaching in high schools have been extended to five years beyond high school.

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[1] U. S. Office of Education. Federal Security Agency. *Education of Teachers as a Function of State Departments of Education.* Bulletin 1940, Monograph No. 6. Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, 1941. p. 83-85.

Against this brightening picture, however, are two dark overtones. The first is the practice of twelve states which certify elementary teachers who are only high-school graduates or who are persons of even less preparation. In five states, county boards of education or examiners or county superintendents of schools issue certificates.[2] While this practice of certification may not be universally bad, at least the door is left wide open for abuses and many creep in, if we may judge from available studies. The second dark aspect of the picture is the large number of emergency teaching certificates that have been necessitated by the war. According to a nationwide study made by the U. S. Office of Education, October 1, 1943, there were some 57,000 persons holding war emergency permits to teach. Teacher shortages are no longer news but the shock grows none the less as the totals mount. Shortage is defined by Ben W. Frasier, director of the study on teacher shortage mentioned above, as the lowering of standards below a permissable minimum or having no qualified teacher for a necessary teaching position. According to a recent magazine article 2,000,000 children in the United States were taught by such teachers in 1943.[3] Of this situation Fannie W. Dunn had this to say: "Today's children and youth are an essential resource for the postwar world. It is they who must work out the staggering problems we shall bequeath to them. Half of the children are in rural America. By all logic, no aspect of the task of saving democracy exceeds in importance their conservation and development. As Dorothy Canfield Fisher has said recently: 'You can interrupt the improving of a road and ten years later go on with it about where you left off, but if you interrupt decent care for children and ten years later begin again to feel responsible for them you can by no means begin where you left off. You find them irreparably grown up and grown up wrong—enemies and liabilities of their communities rather than friends and assets.' "[4]

Further, nearly all people agree that teachers should possess certain characteristics or qualities that are helpful in those who assist others in personality development. There is disagreement on what these personal characteristics are, but many attempts have been made to establish them. The latest, perhaps, is a recent statement of purposes issued by the Commission on Teacher Education of the American Council on Education.[5] In brief these qualities are: (1) respect for personality, (2) community mindedness, (3) rational behavior, (4) skill in cooperation, (5) increasing knowledge, (6) skill in mediating knowledge, (7) friendliness with children, (8) understanding children, (9) social understanding and behavior, (10) good citizenship in the school as a society, (11) skill in evaluation, and (12) faith in the worth of teaching.[6] Apparently the qualities listed by the commission were determined philosophically, and are therefore open to debate, but few teachers in education will deny the importance of them.

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[2] U. S. Office of Education, *op. cit.*, p. 83-85.

[3] DuShane, Donald. "The Teacher Shortage." *Progressive Education* 21: 12-14; January 1944.

[4] *School and Society*. Vol. 55, No. 1431. May 30, 1942. p. 618.

[5] Bigelow, Karl. *Teachers for Our Times*. Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1944. 178 p.

PROBLEM 9. DO RURAL SCHOOLS GET AND RETAIN COMPETENT TEACHERS?

The majority of all teachers in the United States teach in rural schools. According to the U. S. Office of Education, of all the teachers in the United States in 1939-40, 52 percent of them were to be found in rural areas. Since over 50 percent of all the children between five and seventeen years of age are enrolled in rural schools under these teachers, the securing and holding of competent teachers in these schools is one of the major responsibilities of the rural adult citizen. However, an examination of the peacetime record is not encouraging, and the war crisis in teacher shortages, discussed above, is a downright threat to our public-school system.

A study of the status and training of rural teachers from 1860 to 1930 revealed that of all types of schools in the United States the rural school, specifically the small one, had the least power to attract and to hold competent teachers.[7] A study made in 1940 by the Research Division of the National Education Association revealed that if a teacher began his professional career in a small school in the country he was more likely than not to resort to many and frequent changes of positions. In other words, such a beginning teacher can be expected to change his position soon after his first appointment and frequently thereafter so long as he continues to teach in a rural school. In such schools two teachers out of every five are new each year in the positions they hold.[8] A study made in 1943 by the U. S. Office of Education emphasized the conclusions of the National Education Association study. According to the study of the U. S. Office of Education, of the 140,000 public-school teachers new to positions on October 15, 1942, 102,000 of them were employed by rural school systems. Moreover, the study revealed that as of October 15, 1942, one-fourth of all rural teachers were new to their positions.[9]

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[6] Bigelow, Karl, *op. cit.*, p. 154-73.

[7] Wofford, Kate V. *An History of the Status and Training of Rural Teachers 1860-1930.* Pittsburgh, Pa.: Thos. Seviter and Son, 1935. 170 p.

[8] National Education Association Research Division. "The Status of the Teaching Profession." *Research Bulletin* 18: 52-77; March 1940.

[9] Foster, Emery M., and Frasier, Benjamin W. *Some Early Effects of the War Upon Public Schools.* Washington, D. C.: U. S. Office of Education, Federal Security Agency, Circular 218. July 1943. 13 p.

PROBLEM 10. HOW CAN SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS GET AND KEEP COMPETENT TEACHERS?

It may appear mercenary to place higher salaries first in the list of suggestions for attracting and holding competent teachers in the rural schools. However, both experience and research reveal that a desirable professional status is one of the most potent of all forces in the development of strong teaching groups. Professional status is the result of the right combination of income and education, physical and emotional security. Once this combination is achieved the school exerts great influence in the attracting and holding of competent teachers. To substantiate the above statement we have only to examine the records of urban schools where the professional status of teachers always has been considered more desirable than the one held by the rural teacher. The urban teacher is more highly paid than the rural teacher. Indeed salaries tend to increase with the size of the school.[10] Moreover, the tenure of the urban teacher is more secure and he has usually the protection of good retirement systems. All of this tends to give stability and in part explains why the average urban teacher has remained at his teaching post during the war emergency. Because of the desirable conditions under which teaching is performed in urban areas the city schools have been able to recruit each year the best of the rural teaching group. Of course, the person to suffer most in this "drawing off" process is the rural child since such practice indicates a serious discrepancy in his educational opportunities.

Apparently the best answer so far advanced for the solution of the problems suggested above is the provision for federal aid to education. This is no revolutionary step for the federal government since grants for vocational education in high schools have been made for approximately a quarter of a century. On the whole such grants have had only salutary effects upon local school systems. Federally aided courses in agriculture and home economics have tended to make education more realistic and better adapted to the needs of the high-school boys and girls. Moreover, federal grants have tended to raise the professional status and usefulness of teachers. The high-school teachers of agriculture and home economics constitute one of the most competent and stable of the teaching groups in the United States.

If federal grants are beneficial to the children and to the teachers in rural high schools they should be equally as helpful to those in the elementary schools. The need for such assistance was strongly stated in the report of the Advisory Committee on Education appointed by the President of the United States. Said this report in part: "In general the least satisfactory schools are found in rural areas. Although rural schools have improved steadily, there is a wide gap between country and city lines of educational service. Under present conditions there is no prospect that the rural areas will be able to lessen this gap through their own resources. Elementary school service of some sort is available in most communities, but the quality of the service varies greatly. The major problem of the elementary schools is one of providing financial support where it is now inadequate. Improvement is needed in many respects, such as the preparation of teachers, the organization of school districts and the supervision of instruction. But the methods of securing improvement in elementary schools are well known; the major factor that now prevents such improvement is a lack of adequate financial support."[11]

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[10] U. S. Office of Education, Federal Security Agency. *Economic Status of Rural Teachers.* Bulletin 1937, No. 13. Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, 1939. 56 p.

Another adverse condition to attracting and holding competent teachers in rural schools has been suggested in these paragraphs. However, the problem is so pressing that a statement of it seems desirable. The problem is this: rural people must face the necessity of improving the adverse conditions under which many of their teachers are forced to work. Over half of the teachers of the United States—and these are found almost wholly in rural areas—may be discharged without cause at the end of any school year or at the will of the employing official. These teachers are thus subjected to the humiliations of administrative and community restrictions and repressions so that frequently they are actually denied the exercise of their full rights of citizenship within a democracy. The unreasonable and unjust restrictions placed upon rural teachers in their personal and professional lives are a well-known fact. Here again the children also suffer, because we cannot produce free citizens whose teachers are only half free.

The problem of providing competent teachers for the children of rural America is one of the most pressing of the war problems. However, the problem will not be solved with the coming of peace, because the future of rural education is being formed in the present. It behooves us all, therefore, to give serious consideration to this problem in all postwar planning. If the rural children of America are to be served adequately in the future, the whole field of teacher education must be rethought and replanned.

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[11] U. S. Advisory Committee on Education. *The Federal Government and Education.* Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, 1938.

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Chapter 8

Planning Effective Rural School Administration and Organization

PROBLEM II. HOW CAN EFFECTIVE LOCAL SCHOOL UNITS BE DEVELOPED IN RURAL AREAS?

SCHOOL districts of the right kind are necessary to get the right kind of schools. The pioneer school districts fitted the pioneer community and provided the structure needed for a school that taught people to read and write. As communities became older, high schools were built. As modern transportation knitted together open country and town into a unified community, larger and stronger school districts were needed.

The history of school district organization is very different in each state. The changes needed today vary according to the situation in the respective states. Over one hundred years ago, New England changed from districts for each individual school to larger districts covering a whole town or township, and including all of the schools in village and open country. In most states of the Middlewest, which patterned after the original New England school district, this change has not yet been made. Several of these states still have a separate district for every school; others have reorganized into the township unit. The southern states, probably due to the early plantation system, usually have a countywide type of school district that administers to all the schools in the county. It is no doubt true that the Middlewest is in need of larger schools than at present, and that more of the schoolwork should be carried on cooperatively by a group of local schools united thru the county, township, or larger community units. On the other hand, the great need in the South seems to be the development of greater participation by each local community in the work of the school.

The work of a school administrative unit is carried on by a board of education made up of citizens and by the professional executive who is employed to help the board in deciding school policies. This professional executive is usually called the superintendent. In some states he is the county or parish superintendent and in others the district superintendent. The law usually indicates the general area or size and type of communities which each kind of school district serves. It also determines the functions of the districts and the responsibilities of the schoolboard and superintendent.

In all states there are three types of administrative units: the state government itself working primarily thru the state department of education; the local attendance unit which includes the area from which children attend a single school; and, in between these two, the administrative unit.

The county unit in some states is the basic school district, and in others is an intermediate unit which provides certain services to school districts within its area. This unit between the attendance unit serving the school and the state may be locally controlled and operated by the people living within the area, or as in a few states, it may be made up of a professional staff which is employed by the state itself, but which carries on its work within a single county or similar administrative area.

It is quite clear that these three types of units have grown up in all of the states because there are some educational responsibilities such as the certification of teachers that can be carried on best by the whole state acting as the unit. There are other school responsibilities, such as the day-to-day work with the pupils, which can best be carried on within the local school itself. There are other responsibilities, such as the supervision of schools, the use of circuit teachers, the provisions of health services, and the management of school transportation where it is more economical to have a group of schools work together.

In the following discussion outline, five important questions are raised that should be answered in working out a sound administrative organization: (1) What kind of education does the community need? (2) What community characteristics affect the kind of school organization needed? (3) What is a satisfactory school organization? (4) What is a satisfactory attendance unit? (5) What is a satisfactory administrative or supervisory unit?

What Kind of Education Does a Community Need?

The administrative organization of any school is merely a means to an end. It is of no value except as it makes possible the kind of educational activity that the school should carry on. If the school is merely to teach the three R's, a very simple kind of school district is sufficient. If the community wants also to prepare its boys and girls for citizenship so that they know how to use the three R's, can work together intelligently as citizens of the community, can keep themselves healthy, and know how to earn a living, then a much stronger and more complex district organization is needed.[1]

Probably the most important decision to be made is how many grades should the community provide. Should it provide only eight years of elementary school or twelve years, including high school? The question is now being raised in many communities as to whether a kindergarten should be provided and whether a nursery school for children under kindergarten age is needed. There has also been a strong movement in some communities to provide junior college work, and there is a constantly increasing demand that the school offer adult education. Another important problem is whether or not vocational education is to be provided. Are health education and the provision of special health services such as the health examination essential? It is quite clear that a different organization is needed if all the children are to have the various physical examinations than if no health work of any kind is to be provided. In a similar way there needs to be a discussion of the kinds of education which can be built out of community life, of the special material which can be used, of whether vocational education, adult education, library services, and the transportation of pupils are to be included. These are questions to keep in mind when using Chapter 6 as a basis for discussion in preparation for district reorganization.

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[1] The study and discussion necessary in a community to develop the kind of educational program it needs has already been outlined under Chapter 6, "Building the Purposes of the School," and Chapter 11, "Planning an Educational Plant." This discussion should be carried on long enough and in such a thoro manner that it crystallizes into a definite statement of the educational program the new school district organization is to serve.

How Does the Community Affect School Organization?

Equally as important as the kind of education to be provided is the kind of community the school is to serve. The quality of the school will depend a great deal on the attitudes of people. If they believe in education and are anxious to develop good schools they are likely to have good schools. The attitude of the people may be affected by the proportion of persons in different age groups. If most of the citizens have children in school their interest in education is likely to be greater than in a community made up largely of older people whose children have grown up.

Another factor which will greatly affect the kind of school organization needed is the size of school needed for the size of your community. The more sparsely populated an area, the more important that the school organization be set up to meet its special needs. Careful study of sparsity of population has shown a very high relationship between the number of people living in a given area and the size of the school. One study shows that the size of a one-room school is closely related to the number of children per 10,000 acres of farm land, another shows a close relationship between the number of people per square mile in a county and the size of the high schools, while a third shows that the density of population largely determines the need for transporting children to school.

There are hundreds of examples of school districts that have built a school building, even a one-teacher school, larger than now needed because of smaller farm families or larger farms, or because soil erosion has decreased the number of people who can maintain a wholesome standard of living within the school district. The general population trends need to be carefully considered in each community. Other social and economic factors which affect community life are available natural resources, the possibility of developing small industries, the increased mechanization of agriculture, the amount of farm tenancy, and the level of farm prices. Facts on these matters which will aid in reaching sound policies can be obtained from Part II of this yearbook, from the federal census, the state college of agriculture, and the county agricultural agent.

What Are the Essentials of a Good School Organization?

In setting up a sound school district organization it is necessary to have the right purposes in mind toward which to work. The two big purposes of a good school organization have already been discussed: (1) providing the needed educational activities of the school; and (2) setting up an organization which is adapted to the kind of community in which the school is to operate.

A good school organization should provide not only for efficiency but also for democracy in administration. Efficiency has long been emphasized because the smaller districts of pioneer days are no longer adequate to serve most presentday communities. Larger districts are needed to provide the kind of education most communities want for their children. With the loss of rural population in recent years due to smaller families and larger farms, many one-room schools have fewer than ten pupils; in fact many have fewer than five. Such schools cannot be operated economically or efficiently. Even with a very low-paid teacher the per capita costs are extremely high and if the parents want music, art, and the other activities of a modern school for their children the cost is usually out of reach. The same situation applies to many small high schools which were organized before the automobile and are located only a few miles apart on modern highways. Something like half of the high schools of the United States have fewer than seventy-five pupils enrolled. This often means poorly-paid and burdened teachers providing a much narrower curriculum than could be offered at the same cost or less if the schools united. It is quite clear that a great many rural communities in the United States could provide more education at a smaller per capita cost thru larger districts and some transportation of pupils. For example, the children now attending small one-room schools can often be transported to the nearest graded school at a very low cost and placed in grades already small without the addition of another teacher. This means that the total added cost of teaching these children is merely transportation and school supplies.

There is, however, a very important element in the pioneer school districts' organization which must be preserved. That is its democracy. When the pioneers first moved into a new locality they built their homes and cut the forest or broke the sod to plant crops. As soon as they had taken care of the most pressing problems of creature comfort they almost invariably began talking about a school. Usually they had to make plans for a school, impose tax levies, organize a school district, build a school building, and employ a teacher with very little help from educational officers. A school which grew out of the efforts and sacrifice of the people in this manner had something very valuable about it to the people, even tho it may not have been operated in the most efficient manner possible. It had the values that come from a democracy at work.

In reorganizing school districts, we should therefore ask the question: How can we preserve the values of democracy in a larger and more efficient organization? Usually when one talks about the values of democracy in school administration he is thinking of one or more of three things: (1) the opportunity of each citizen to have a part in the work of the school; (2) the opportunity of the local community to take the initiative in providing a better school if it so desires; and (3) the exercise of some control by the local community over the work of the school. All three are important and should be preserved in any kind of school organization setup. How can they be realized in your community?

What Is a Good Attendance Unit?

How can a community decide what is a good attendance unit? The kind of attendance unit needed will depend on the size and type of the community. With modern communities of the town or village and open country it will probably be the elementary and secondary grades combined into one school. In some cases it will be an elementary school and occasionally an elementary school with one or more high-school grades. In some open-country neighborhoods which are isolated or where neighborhood interest is strong and where there are enough children, the one-teacher schools may be best.

What Should Be the Size of an Attendance Unit?

Before the size of the school can be determined the following questions must be answered:

What is the size of the natural sociological community? How can children get to and from school? How many children can be taught economically? The question of the size of the natural sociological community has already been discussed in Chapter 2. It must be surveyed and mapped before the other questions can be answered. Based on the sociological community the question immediately arises as to how far children should walk to school and how far they should be transported. The U. S. Office of Education has suggested that elementary pupils should not have to walk more than one and one-half or two miles or ride a bus more than one hour to or from school, and that high-school pupils should not have to walk more than two or two and one-half miles to or from school or ride a bus more than one and one-half hours each way. How would these standards apply in your community? Would they be affected by climate, the lay of the land, highway hazards, and similar factors, or because of the size of the natural sociological community? Would the distance children come to your school approach these maximum distances or be considerably less?

What should be the size of the school itself? Many attempts have been made to set a minimum size for schools. Usually these minimums are based on economical per capita costs. When schools get too small per pupil costs become high. When a teacher has only ten pupils the cost per pupil, just to pay her salary, is twice what it would be for twenty pupils and three times what it would be for thirty. A report of the U. S. Office of Education suggests that elementary schools should be large enough for one teacher per grade and thirty pupils per teacher. This would be 240 pupils for an eight-grade school or 180 pupils for a six-grade school. It suggests that the high school should have at least three hundred pupils and ten teachers for a six-year junior-senior high school or for a separate junior high school or a separate senior high school. These standards would result in a twelve-year school of about five hundred or more pupils and at least sixteen teachers. How would this apply to your community? Would your school likely be larger or smaller, and why?

Here are some actual problems which arose in New York State, as reported by Cowen and Coxe. How would you solve them?

> 1. The first area to be discussed is one in which there are two small villages only a mile apart. Due to available water power these villages early developed small industries but these are now declining rapidly. Besides this industrial activity, they are trading centers for a considerable rural area. Each has a small high school. These schools are more than ten miles from any other possible high-school center. It is obvious that two high schools should not be maintained. It is also obvious that they could not easily be taken into any other administrative unit. The proposal was made, therefore, that each of the places maintain an elementary school of six grades and that a new junior-senior high-school building be erected on a site between the two. There was enough local interest in such a solution that one man offered a site between the two places at no cost to the districts. Later the matter of centralization was voted upon favorably, but when the question of a bond issue came before the two communities it failed to carry.
>
> 2. The second area is in the foothills of the Adirondacks. The center of this area is a small village built up by a single industry, a paper mill, at a time when pulpwood was plentiful locally. Due to a change in industrial conditions the paper mill was closed and later scrapped. While the mill was flourishing a modern brick school building was constructed on a large, favorable site and part of high-school work was offered. With the closing of the mill the population and consequently the school enrolment have rapidly decreased. It seemed obvious that this village should not be made the center of an administrative unit, nor even be a high school, altho it may exist as an elementary unit for a number of years to come. Even if all industrial and commercial activities in the village completely disappear, there will be enough elementary-school

enrolment from the neighboring territory to continue the school in this location.

3. This area offered a peculiarly difficult problem to solve because of a scattered and sparse population. It is a very narrow area about sixty miles in length and is largely covered with second growth forest. It could not be increased in width because of scarcity of population. There is one main road running east and west thru the area, and nearly all of the population is found along this highway. At the west end of the area is a large and fairly prosperous village; the population at the other end is very sparse and will probably never increase due to the terrain which is mountainous. From the standpoint of density of population the high school for the whole area should be in the large village, but distance makes it impossible to transport pupils from the eastern end. It was proposed that the whole area be made one administrative unit with two junior-senior high schools, one located in the large village and the other located as centrally as possible in the eastern part of the district. By putting the whole area into one unit, it will be easier to make necessary adjustments which may be brought about by population changes. Also a more satisfactory tax unit can be arranged and opportunities may more easily be found for extending special services.

4. The problem in the area about to be described arose largely because the area was not homogeneous. In part of the area the population was increasing; industries were active and growing rapidly; the population was partly foreign; the transportation and communication facilities were excellent because of its location both on main highways and on a trunkline railroad. The other part of the area had a decreasing population, was in an agricultural section, and was off main highways. A village is in each part of the area. The village in the part of the area with decreasing population has a very enviable educational tradition, a strong alumni association, and an excellent school building which serves as a cultural center for the community. These conditions make it out of the question to consider removing this high school even tho it is below standard size and will probably decrease in enrolment in the future. The two villages are five miles apart. A lake bounds the village to the north and marginal land is to the south of the other village; thus neither can become the center of independent administrative units. It was proposed that the two villages be placed in the same administrative unit, but both high schools be maintained at least temporarily. In order to offer a good educational program economically, it was suggested that some members of the faculty, and possibly in some cases whole classes of pupils, be transported from one school to the other. This situation represents a method by which adequate services can be provided to pupils in the case of a small high school which it is inadvisable to abandon. By placing both high schools in the same administrative unit, cooperation between the two places is more fully assured than if they are under separate boards of education.

What Is a Good Larger Local Unit?

Why has each state set up some form of local unit between the community school and the state? What are the duties of this unit in your state? In most states this unit is the county, in New England and New York the supervisory union or district superintendency, and there are some modifications in other states. The duties of this intermediate unit vary widely. In states like Maryland and West Virginia the county is the basic administrative unit with primary authority for operating the schools, while in some states the county (or other intermediate unit) has only general supervisory authority over open country schools. The differences are due largely to tradition, to laws, and in general to the nature of the communities. The degree of sparsity of population has a bearing on the work of the county superintendent and the number of people who can be properly served by his office. Regional differences also are found.

What should be the work of the county or larger local unit in your state? Should it provide supervisors for the schools? Should it levy a countywide tax? Should it lay out school bus routes and operate school buses? Should it recommend or hire teachers? Should it handle the quantity purchase of supplies? Should it provide special services such as circuit teachers, a county library, nurses, and health officers who serve several schools? Should it have a board of education and a superintendent to help develop educational policies and work out more effective ways of providing education? Should it provide the avenue thru which the local district and the state can work together? Should the county board act as a board of appeals to settle disputes in or between local districts as is now done by county boards of education in Ohio? What should be the size of the larger local unit? Counties do not always provide a suitable size. Often the people settled a county after the county lines were laid out. Many towns and many more natural sociological communities cut across county lines. Counties vary in size. One California county is larger in area than the states of Connecticut, Delaware, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island combined. Within a single state one county is over nine times the size of another in area, one is twenty-five times the size of another in population, and one is nine hundred times the size of another in assessed wealth. With such wide differences a county school unit might be good in one place and very undesirable somewhere else.

Various standards have been set up to determine the size of the larger school unit. Briscoe[2] found that units that require fewer than forty teachers seldom pay sufficient salaries to employ and keep trained superintendents, and that many do not acquire such leadership until they are as large as fifty to sixty teachers. He found that units of eighty to one hundred teachers require a small proportion of the current expense budget for administration and that the most economical units in this respect employed two hundred or more teachers. Dawson[3] recommended that the most economical unit which provided all the modern services needed such as health, supervision, business management, and the like should serve an area having around 350 teachers, 10,000 to 12,000 pupils, and a total population of 40,000 to 50,000 people. He then showed that the minimum size of a local administrative unit is one having about 1600 pupils. How large an area would be required in your locality to make units of the above sizes? Considering the above standards, the area required to provide the population they call for, and the work which the larger unit should do in your locality, how large a unit of people do you feel could work together to give themselves the education they need? Would it be a county, part of one or more counties, or several counties together?

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[2] Briscoe, A. O. *The Size of the Local Unit for Administration and Supervision of Public Schools.* New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, 1935.

[3] Dawson, Howard A. *Satisfactory Local School Units.* Nashville, Tenn.: Division of Surveys and Field Studies, George Peabody College for Teachers, 1934.

How Can Reorganization Be Obtained?

A sound reorganization of school districts cannot be assured unless all the necessary facts are available, purposes are set up, and intelligent decisions made which take into consideration both facts and purposes. Trained research workers are needed to make surveys to obtain and interpret the facts. They are also needed to interpret the state laws governing reorganization. State departments of education should furnish the necessary services and leadership. Then full discussion of the situation by the citizens of the locality is necessary to arrive at intelligent and satisfactory decisions.

Chapter 9

The Coordination of Community Activities for Educational Purposes

AMERICAN pioneers found in this country an abundance of fertile land, mineral treasures, virgin forests, fish and game, and few problems that could not be readily solved within the manpower and resources available. However, as the resources were used up, and as the population increased and moved from place to place, new problems arose that did not respond to old methods of attack. In recent years many of these problems have become acute and solutions to them have been sought in the creation of private and public agencies.

This procedure has resulted in a large number of government and non-government agencies, each with a personnel and a program designed to accomplish a specific purpose. Frequently, because problems refuse to confine themselves to specific areas, the personnel and scope of the several agencies overlap, and the resulting competition often causes an agency to lose sight of community problems in attempting to accomplish an agency objective in a competitive field. This competition has also resulted in certain gaps in programs of community needs, especially among those social problems that have political implications and traditional prejudices.

Suggestions for preventing duplication of agencies and avoiding gaps in community programs have been made from time to time. Most of these suggestions contemplate a coordination of agencies and services. The term "coordination" has, by implication and example, a variety of meanings ranging from tolerance of a competing agency to the merging of two or more agencies. The phrase "working together for community improvement" seems to be present in most of the acceptable conceptions of community coordination.

The pressure for coordination has resulted in a variety of types of coordinated programs on local, county, state, regional, and national levels. Almost every community has had at sometime or another what it has termed a coordinated program. However, outstanding examples of successful community coordination are the exception rather than the rule, especially in rural America. There is a certain amount of agreement among rural leaders that some type or kind of coordination is both desirable and essential. These leaders, however, realize that many difficulties and problems stand in the way of a coordinated program for community improvement. A discussion of some of these problems follows.

PROBLEM 12. WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF ORGANIZATION FOR COORDINATION?

The type of organization most commonly found for effecting coordination is the neighborhood or local community council, various types of which include the farmers clubs of the Midwest, the West Virginia community councils, the Missouri standard community associations, and special interest organizations such as the local parent-teacher association, the Farm Bureau, the Grange, and various luncheon clubs.

The Alexandria, Ohio, local community council is composed of representatives of designated agencies such as schools, churches, and the Grange; and spec[illegible]viduals such as the mayor and county agent. This council analyzes comm[illegible]ty needs, decides what action is necessary to meet the needs, and so far as possible stimulates its member organizations to assume responsibility for carrying out recommendations.[1]

A number of types of county organizations for the coordination of community activities have been established. The county land-use planning committees sponsored by representatives of state and national agricultural agencies came into prominence in 1938 with a comprehensive planning program. The Garrard County, Kentucky, Land-Use Planning Committee was composed of nineteen members from the previously existing County Agricultural Extension Advisory Committee. The county council invited selected citizens in each of the nine community areas to form local committees. These local committees studied land-use practices and made recommendations to the county committee which in turn prepared a county planning report.[2]

The Greenville County Council for Economic Development illustrates a type of county planning for community improvement. The council had its beginning in 1936 when twenty-four persons from twenty-three organizations in Greenville County formed an organized group to: (1) offer opportunity for growth among the people along cultural and technical lines; (2) coordinate existing agencies; (3) increase community pride and spirit; (4) foster community enterprise; and (5) develop a consciousness of the significance of social problems. The council was expanded with the general idea of including one hundred important people from various sections of the county. The membership base was later broadened to include all persons who accepted responsibilities in developing the program.[3]

A number of the states have formed state councils for planning and improvement. The Arkansas Economic Council is an illustration of this type of state coordination. The council is composed of about 250 persons representative of commerce, industry, agriculture, labor, and the professions. The council has for its purpose, that of converting the resources and energies of Arkansas, now completely devoted to winning the war, to peacetime pursuits. It is organized into seventeen committees for specific phases of the development program. These committees are coordinated thru an executive committee composed of the officers of the council and the chairman of the committees.

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[1] Works, George A., and Lesser, Simon O. *Rural America Today*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1943. 450 p.

[2] Beers, Howard W., and others. *Community Land-Use Planning Committees*. Bulletin 417, Agricultural Experiment Station. Lexington: University of Kentucky, 1941. 236 p.

[3] Brunner, Edmund de S. and others. *Community Organization and Adult Education*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942. 124 p.

A number of regional and national groups are engaged in some activities concerned with community coordination. The Southern Rural Life Council of Nashville, Tennessee, was organized in 1943 to improve the quality of living in the South by encouraging and cooperating in action programs in the states and communities. The American Council on Education Committee on Southern Regional Studies and Education with offices at Knoxville, Tennessee, is planning and sponsoring conferences of regional groups interested in resources conservation problems with the idea of formulating cooperative plans for translating regional resources material into teaching materials. An example of a national agency is the recently organized Committee for Economic Development. This is an independent businessmen's group organized nationwide to help commerce and industry plan for high levels of profitable production and employment in the postwar period. The national board of trustees stimulates the organization of community committees for local coordination.

PROBLEM 13. WHAT ARE THE DIFFICULTIES OF COORDINATION?

Community organizations of the single purpose type have found many problems and difficulties and these have increased many fold in agencies attempting coordinating activities. Persistent problems are those concerned with initiating organization, maintaining membership, resolving conflicts, providing worthwhile activities, and accomplishing objectives. Some examples of these problems are indicated in the following discussion.

Local groups interested in community coordination frequently face the problem of how to start the organization. The Alexander, Ohio, Community Council was organized as a result of a three-day centennial celebration, and the Stonycreek Community Association was the result of a union church service.[4] Farmers clubs in Minnesota usually were started by one interested person inviting two or more neighbors to his home for a discussion of community problems.[5] Two interested individuals in Greenville, South Carolina, called representatives of community agencies together and initiated the Greenville County Council for Community Development. The county land-use planning committees were initiated by county agricultural agents stimulated by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the land-grant colleges of the nation. The Arkansas Economic Council was initiated largely thru the efforts of interested individuals in the state planning board.

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[4] Works, George A., and Lesser, Simon O., *op. cit.*, p. 389.

[5] Sanderson, Dwight, and Polson, Robert A. *Rural Community Organization*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1939. 448 p.

Many coordinating agencies operating over counties, states, or regions have been handicapped because their start was from the top down. The county land-use planning program has failed to achieve desired results according to Neal C. Gross and a large part of this failure is due to the planning structure.[6] Many of the county communities were not especially interested and the process of planning simply became another procedure of the specialist rather than a democratic process.

The maintenance of membership in the face of competing activities has proved unsurmountable to many organizations. One small rural community near an urban center had thirty-two formal special interest organizations each having to compete for members and leaders in order to survive.[7] This community effected its coordination thru a program of community improvement sponsored by the local parent-teacher association. Meetings were held monthly in which definite community problems were discussed and programs of action planned.

The community score card has proved valuable in West Virginia for maintaining membership in the community council. The score card is a measuring device for comparing the nature and scope of community activities and services in a given community to established standards. Conflicts and fears provide a source of difficulties for organizations. Brunner[8] attributes the failure of the Greenville County Council for Community Development to achieve a full-fledged continuance to such factors as a fear of the council's potential power, conflicts in interracial policies, slum clearance programs, early disagreement within the council, and provincialism of the county.

PROBLEM 14. WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES OF COMMUNITY COORDINATION?

A study of the successes and failures of the many organizations for community coordination provides some bases for correcting present difficulties and avoiding future pitfalls. The difficulties experienced have largely centered around such factors as objectives, organization membership, and programs of work. Some guiding principles and procedures for each of these factors are as follows:

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[6] Gross, Neal C. "A Post Mortem on County Planning." *Journal of Farm Economics:* Vol. XXV, No. 3. August 1943. p. 644-61.

[7] Boyd, F.; Oyler, M.; and Nicholls, W. D. *Factors in the Success of Rural Organization.* Bulletin 364. Agricultural Experiment Station. Lexington: University of Kentucky, 1936. 25 p.

[8] Brunner, Edmund de S., *op. cit.*, p. 107.

The solution of community problems should provide the basis for coordinated effort. Attempts to unify the several agencies into an integrated whole have met with little success. Community problems have provided the best basis for community coordination and agencies have made contributions to the solution of community problems. Little progress has been made in effecting a formal division of responsibility between agencies but some progress has been made in informal agreements with reference to responsibility for segments of a specific problem in a specified community. A superficial statement of an objective is not enough. A sincere and unwavering desire to solve the troublesome community problems is of first importance in accomplishing the objectives of a coordinated program.

The type of organization should fit the needs of the community. Experience has shown that there is no one best type of community coordination. Informal and unorganized groups have frequently accomplished more than formal groups. Special interest organizations which limit the scope of their endeavor have also been responsible for securing a measure of coordination. Direct community organizations, in which all citizens who participate are members, are perhaps better adapted for small communities; and indirect organizations, in which groups are represented in the form of a council, have generally proved more effective in larger areas. The important consideration is that the group or organization provide a device or facility to ascertain the sentiment of the group and permit it to act as a unit. The most successful organizations are those organized and directed in the local community. The practice of selecting an easy administrative, unit such as a state or county, and imposing a planning program thru this unit on a local community, has met with little success.

Organization programs should be based on community need and provide for individual participation. The most satisfactory way to promote community coordination is to find problems and projects that will satisfy needs and provide opportunities for people to work on these problems. The first step in program planning is to determine the community needs and the community survey is a useful device for this purpose. The first community meetings should be designed to encourage community solidarity thru the use of activities in which the entire community may participate. Programs should be planned in advance and should provide variety and ample time for group discussion. Some important points to consider in planning community organization programs as outlined by Hummel are as follows:[9]

1. Three projects make a good average program.
2. Each project should be definite as to exactly what is to be done and how much is to be done.

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[9] Hummel, B. L. *Community Organization in Missouri.* Circular 183. Agricultural Extension Service. Columbia: University of Missouri, 1926.

3. Select only those things which the committee is sure can be done during the year (may be part of a long-time program).

4. Select only projects which will be appreciated by the people of the community when completed. In case of doubt create a desire first.

5. At least part of the projects must produce visible results which will be seen and appreciated by the otherwise disinterested.

6. Some projects should produce immediate results, some during the latter part of the year.

7. The projects selected should be sufficiently different to give variety to the program.

8. Select projects which call for the cooperative effort of a large number of people of the community.

9. The program of work should carry some good services to every part of the community.

10. When all projects have been selected, look over the entire program and make sure that it can be done during the year.

PROBLEM 15. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL IN COMMUNITY COORDINATION?

The school possesses a unique advantage in providing leadership for programs of community coordination. Many studies have shown that the school plays a more important part than any other institution in securing group action and community unification. The school is maintained by all the people and there is general agreement among them concerning its objectives. People may differ in religion, politics, and business interests but all are interested in the education of their children. The school faculty enjoys the respect of the citizens and school facilities are provided for all people of the community. These facts make of the rural high school a most important institution for stimulating community coordination.

The recent trend toward the utilization of rural problems and community resources in rural school curriculums further strengthens the position of the school in community planning for improving the quality of living. The acceptance of this idea places definite responsibility on the school for assisting the people to solve their problems more effectively. This philosophy is exemplified in the indigenous or community school programs that have grown up in many sections of the country. These community school programs provide facilities such as canning plants, refrigeration systems, beauty parlors, and other facilities not ordinarily available in rural communities that may be utilized by the community for improving the quality of living as well as for providing instructional laboratories for school pupils.

These community school programs have provided a stimulus for the organization of community councils in many communities. The patrons of Jordan rural school in Greenville County, South Carolina, wanted a better school. They organized a community council, secured a health worker, and constructed a small health clinic. The people were examined, the well water tested and purified, the homes beautified, and the community made over. The Cold Springs, Alabama, school's attack on hookworm and other diseases resulted in the organization of a community council which serves as a planning and administrative group for an extensive program of community health, religion, recreation, highways, and program coordination.[10]

The first step toward coordination of agencies is implied in one of the objectives established by the rural education division of the North Carolina Education Association in which it is suggested that the school draw its people into closer touch with all existing agencies whose functions can aid the rural patron. The procedure is that of inviting the agencies to meet with the people of the community for the discussion of problems and the contributions that the agencies may make toward their solution.[11] The community school program sponsored by West Georgia College for the education of rural teachers has stimulated local discussion groups in nine communities in the county. These communities built and are operating four canneries, two feed mills, one gristmill, a sweet potato curing house, and a syrup mill. Three cooperative tractor plows have been purchased and two credit unions organized.[12]

It should be remembered, however, that the school is not only a chief factor in the integration of the interests of a community, but also it may be a chief cause of community conflicts. The long struggle over school consolidation, curriculum changes, and school organization has caused many community conflicts that have tended to limit the usefulness of the school as a coordinating agency. The fact remains, however, that with intelligent leadership the school provides the best single agency for coordinating community activities for educational purposes.

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[10] *The Mountain Comes to the School.* New Dominion Series, No. 46. Charlottesville: Extension Division, University of Virginia, 1944.

[11] Allison, Mrs. R. L. "Rural Education in Application." *Journal of the National Education Association* 33: 87-88; April 1944.

[12] *A College and a County.* Bulletin Volume IX, No. 4. Carrolton, Ga.: West Georgia College, 1943.

Chapter 10

Developing an Effective Program of Pupil Transportation

One of the problems in rural education to which we must give increased attention in coming years is the transportation of pupils in order that better educational facilities may be brought in reach of all children and youth. This particular activity has recently assumed considerable importance in the financing and administration of the educational program. It is desirable, therefore, that thoughtful citizens understand the main problems involved.

The growth in pupil transportation may be indicated by certain data covering the decade 1933 to 1942. The number of school buses increased from 66,320 to 92,516 and the number of school children transported from 2,374,488 to 4,503,081. The cost for this service almost doubled, being $50,533,603 in 1933 and $92,921,805 in 1942. During the decade 1929 to 1938 the number of schools providing transportation increased from 16,518 to 36,336 and the mileage covered by the bus routes from 425,000 to 1,224,279.

As is to be expected, the provision of transportation facilities has not proceeded evenly among the several states. According to Noble,[1] in 1938 New York and Ohio ranked at the top of the list as regards number of schools and buses, miles of route, children carried, and cost of service while Delaware, Nebraska, and Rhode Island were at the bottom.

These figures above, showing the development of transportation during the decade ending in 1938, in all probability represent only a first significant step in the provision of these facilities. As the number of pupils in rural areas attending high school increases and as the number of schools with adequate programs develops, there is certain to be a considerable increase in this activity. The 4½ percent, approximately, of the expenditures for public elementary and secondary schools in 1942 used for transportation will undoubtedly become considerably larger during the next decade or two.

PROBLEM 16. WHAT ARE SATISFACTORY STANDARDS FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION?

One of the first problems that a community must deal with is that of providing a transportation program that is safe and efficient, and yet as economical as possible. Standards for school buses have, we know from our general experience, made marked development in the last decade. A bulletin published in 1939[2] outlines the efforts made by representatives of the various states to come to an agreement as regards suitable standards for buses.

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[1] Noble, Marcus C. S., Jr. *Pupil Transportation in the United States.* Scranton, Pa.: International Textbook Co., 1940. p. 16-17.

Important as are standards for vehicles, there are other factors that must be considered in the establishment and maintenance of an adequate transportation program. The larger problem involved may be stated in this way:

> What standards as regards vehicles, drivers, routing, and so forth, should be established for transportation in order to insure a reasonable degree of safety, efficiency, and economy? How may the quality of a particular transportation program be measured? How does the program in our community rate in terms of definite standards?

Only recently has an effort been made to establish means for measuring the effectiveness of a transportation program. In 1941 Virgil Ruegsegger published his Pupil Transportation Score Card.[3] The factors taken into account in this score card are presented by the following summary:

1. *Regularity of Service* — *135 Points*
Percentage of trips made; percentage of trips made on time; percentage of trips made by regular driver; percentage of trips made by emergency bus.

2. *Convenience* — *120 Points*
Percentage of transported pupils picked up at home, or walking less than one-quarter mile; percentage of transported pupils riding on first return trip; time pupils are on bus; radius of area around school within which pupils are not transported.

3. *Comfort* — *110 Points*
Percentage of forward-facing seats; percentage of seats well padded over springs—sponge rubber, or the equivalent; percentage of bus bodies meeting the standards issued by the state department of education or Public Service Commission; percentage of overloading.

4. *Security* — *200 Points*
Percentage of transported pupils injured in transit; liability insurance; frequency of supervision; safety hazards en route; first-aid kit on bus, with driver trained in applying first aid.

5. *Conveyance* — *225 Points*
Weight capacity per rated seating capacity; percentage of rated seating capacity utilized; purchase price per rated seating capacity; present value per rated seating capacity; effectiveness of brakes; frequency of inspection; storage; servicing; frequency of suspension of a bus by Public Service Commission.

6. *Operating Personnel* — *210 Points*
Sex; age; previous experience in commercial driving; occupation; tenure; salary; physical examination; morals, character, personal appearance.

Total 1000 Points

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[2] Cyr, Frank W., and others. *Minimum Standards for School Buses.* Scranton, Pa.: International Textbook Co., 1939. p. 42.

[3] Butterworth, Julian E., and Ruegsegger, Virgil. *Administering Pupil Transportation.* Minneapolis: Educational Publishers, 1941. p. 51-86. The score card is published also as a separate bulletin.

Such a score card enables a community to get a measure of its transportation program in terms of reasonably uniform standards. Experience has shown that the score card has a high degree of reliability since scores are very nearly the same when a system is measured by different persons.

It must be recognized, however, that this is merely a first step in the development of an adequate scoring device. As more exact information regarding all types of transportation problems is secured it will become possible to improve the accuracy of the score card. By means of this a community may see where its greatest weaknesses lie and can then determine what needs to be done to improve regularity, convenience, comfort, and the like.

Improvement may often be secured without very much increase in cost. For example, greater care in the selection of drivers and definite instructions regarding personal appearance can make an appreciable effect upon the score to which a community is entitled. Also, improvement in the transportation system may be secured as attention is given to several of the factors relating to the conveyance.

PROBLEM 17. HOW MUCH SHOULD PUPIL TRANSPORTATION COST?

Available information regarding transportation costs is quite inadequate. However, information regarding costs per pupil transported in the various states is both interesting and illuminating. The following table gives information for ten states:

TABLE 1. Pupil Transportation Cost

State	*County cost*			*Year*
	Highest	*Lowest*	*Average*	
Alabama (white)	$42.90	$12.51	$17.91	1940-41
Arizona	36.07	9.01	13.81	1937-38
Kentucky	31.11	4.80	13.69	1935-36
Louisiana (white)	64.49	10.72	19.61	1941-42
Maryland	30.97	11.06	18.94	1940-41
New York*	67.66	6.72	30.07	1939-40
North Carolina	25.18	3.83	7.77	1940-41
Oklahoma	54.68	12.69	20.89	1937-38
West Virginia	33.66	8.89	14.22	1937-38
Wyoming	88.54	24.82	55.01	1940-41

*Data for,66 central rural school districts maintaining district owned buses.

It will be noted that there is a marked variation within each state as regards the county having the lowest cost for transportation and the highest cost. It will be noted, also, that even the average costs vary among these ten states. This variation is due to several factors. Standards for transportation vary and, naturally, the costs will therefore vary. Not all of the states include the same items in their transportation costs, and sometimes different counties within the same state are not uniform in the items included. Some states employ pupils as drivers, and where that policy is allowed costs are certain to be low as compared with states where only adults may be employed as drivers. It is well known, also, that there are defensible differences in transportation costs due to variations in the density of population. Density naturally affects the length of the route and the size of the vehicle that should be used, and both of these factors are important in determining the cost per pupil transported. While the data given above cannot be used in determining whether transportation costs in a particular community are reasonable, they tend to stimulate such further analysis as will throw light upon what such costs should be.

Where the score of a transportation system indicates that there is a marked weakness that should be remedied, it will be necessary to determine approximately what the improvement would cost. Such information as we have indicates rather definitely that it is often possible to reduce costs in many particulars, of which the following are illustrations: (1) In purchasing the bus, it is important that enough money be invested to secure a vehicle that is substantial, but it is easy to expend more money than is essential for this purpose. (2) The more a bus can be used, the more the costs per pupil transported will be reduced; if a vehicle can be used on more than one route, this obviously reduces the cost per pupil transported for driver service and for such fixed charges as insurance and interest. (3) Costs per pupil may also be reduced by having vehicles fully loaded. (4) Using larger vehicles and increasing the length of a route usually makes possible a saving in driver cost. (5) As soon as it becomes possible to secure new buses, it may be economical to replace old buses with new ones. (6) There may be some saving thru district ownership as compared with the contract method of transportation. (7) Maintenance costs may be reduced by wholesale purchase of oil, gas, and other supplies and by taking advantage of any contract price for these items that may be established by the state.

The following questions should be considered by the community in evaluating its pupil transportation: How do our transportation costs compare with those of other communities? Do we need to improve the quality of our transportation service? If so, what will it probably cost? Can we secure the desired quality of service at a lower cost?

PROBLEM 18. WHAT SHOULD BE THE PLAN OF STATE AID?

Getting the pupil to a school where he can secure an adequate program should not be considered a responsibility of the community only; the state should bear a part of the burden. Accordingly, most of our states have made arrangements for assisting communities in maintaining their transportation systems. Several different methods are now employed in granting such assistance to localities. One state pays the community one-half of the sum expended for transportation, but not to exceed $35 per year for each pupil conveyed. A second state allows not over $3 per month per pupil for transportation. A third sets aside a definite sum for transportation, and then distributes the money among the different localities according to average daily attendance. A fourth grants aid on the basis of the number of teachers, or the number of vehicle miles. In a fifth state, all costs for transportation are paid by the state. A sixth reimburses the community upon the basis of its wealth—the smaller the wealth, the greater the proportion of the transportation costs paid by the state. A seventh considers transportation a responsibility of the state, and undertakes to assist each community fairly in maintaining the transportation program.

The foregoing statements indicate merely the *general* conceptions that now exist in various states as to how state aid should be granted for transportation. Whichever of these methods a state may decide to use, it is important to discover the factors that affect costs. There is not space here to do more than mention some of these factors that have been shown to have influence, e.g., density of population, number transported, length of bus route, ownership of bus, cost of bus, type of road, and so forth. One conclusion seems warranted: the significant factors vary according to conditions. Ohio and Oklahoma are illustrations of states that have attempted to determine factors significantly related to cost and to so distribute aid from the state that these factors will be taken into account. Too often, however, this important matter has not yet received serious consideration.

The following questions are suggested for discussion: What method is used in our state for assisting in the payment of transportation costs? What percentage of the costs for this purpose in our community is paid by the state? Could the *method* of assisting in the payment of transportation costs be improved in our state?

PROBLEM 19. WHAT PLAN OF SCHOOL BUS OWNERSHIP IS BEST?

Altho information as of 1936-37 indicated that 63.3 percent of all school buses were contract vehicles, there seems to be a trend toward district ownership. However, several factors must be taken into consideration in answering the question as to which type of transportation would be best for a particular community.

It is not definitely known which type of transportation is the safest. A study made in Minnesota in 1934 showed that district-owned buses had only 11.4 percent of deficiencies, while those privately owned had 30.4

percent of deficiencies. In Oklahoma in 1936-37 an analysis of over 2200 buses showed that 70.6 percent of the school-owned buses were in satisfactory condition, whereas only 53.3 percent of contract vehicles could be so classified. There is little reason why one system could not be as safe as the other, providing due care were taken to use only buses in good condition and to employ only competent drivers. There probably is more danger that contract transportation will be less safe than district-owned transportation for the simple reason that the contractor naturally desires to make as good a profit as possible; in fact, he often cannot make a profit unless he cuts all costs to a minimum.

In general, such information as we have regarding the cost of the two types of transportation shows that district-owned transportation is the more economical. At present, however, one cannot place too much dependence upon existing data for the following reasons: (1) In district-owned transportation it is not uncommon to ignore the percentage of the principal's time and that of other regular school employees given to transportation, in determining the cost of this service. Obviously, in contract transportation all such services must be included in the contract price. (2) Where school garages are maintained, these charges are sometimes not made against the transportation system. (3) Sometimes, too, fixed charges (for example, fire insurance and interest) are counted against the entire school costs but not against transportation. On the other hand, there are factors that should tend to make district transportation of the same quality as contract transportation more economical. Among these items are the elimination of gas, sales or property taxes, and license fees; the elimination of direct charges for profit and management; the possibility of buying vehicles, gas, oil, and similar supplies in quantity at a greater advantage unless the contractor has a sufficiently large number of vehicles to make such quantity purchases feasible.

There is a further advantage in district ownership in that the school can control more directly transportation policies and can make changes at anytime without the possible necessity of revising the transportation contracts. When the use of such a score card as that by Ruegsegger is generally employed, there is no reason why this question as to which system is safer and more efficient cannot be answered definitely. By means of that score card, transportation programs, whether by contract or by district ownership, can be measured and, in part, even *plans* for transportation systems can be evaluated.

A community concerned about this matter of providing transportation thru contract—or district-owned vehicles should consider such questions as these: Which kind of service is likely to give the best quality of vehicle under our conditions? Which, the best type of managerial ability? If contract transportation is adopted, can the utmost of safety and efficiency be insured? Which is likely to cost less? It is entirely practicable to make an estimate of the cost of these two systems in any given situation, and with such facts in mind, an intelligent decision as to what ought to be done in a particular community can be made.

The following questions are suggested for discussion: What major factors determine whether the school (district, county, or other unit) should own and operate the transportation vehicle? What policy seems best for our community?

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Chapter 11

The Educational Plant

This bulletin has presented a broader concept of rural education than was generally held a few years ago. The modern rural school as it is portrayed here has not completely fulfilled its rightful function when it teaches mathematics and English well. It has not even satisfied the demands that should properly be made upon it when it adds departments of home economics and agriculture. The school that meets the specifications laid down in this bulletin functions in these ways, it is true, but it goes much further by way of contributing from the economic, cultural, aesthetic, and social standpoint to more effective and satisfying living for boys and girls, and men and women in the community. Every resource the community possesses, both human and material, that can add meaning and vitality to education and thus to the improvement of individual and group living, is drawn upon. The school does not work by itself. Its program is the result of the planning and participation of all.

Such a point of view is naturally reflected in the type of educational plant the community should secure and maintain. Where once the buildings were planned for youth alone, they are now designed for those of all ages. While such planning was important in ordinary times it has a compelling significance now with the vast problem of reabsorbing returning veterans and released war workers facing every community in the months and years ahead. No school can afford to stand by and assume that the momentous readjustments to be made will take care of themselves. Retraining and the extension of education to higher levels will be powerful tools in converting our society from a war to peacetime economy and they must be used to the full.

Whereas once the school was a self-contained and separate entity, it must now allow for the free interchange of resources usually known as school on the one hand and community on the other. Whereas once the boundary of the school grounds encompassed the facilities used in education and everything thought to be needed was brought within that boundary, today any plot of land, lathe, shop, typewriter, store, or kitchen either privately or publicly owned is looked upon as a potential facility for the preparation of some boy or girl or adult for more effective living.

With these general observations we come to this problem:

PROBLEM 20. WHAT EDUCATIONAL PLANT FACILITIES SHOULD BE PROVIDED?

A reading of the whole of the material that precedes this section is needed to give a full answer to this question as well as an understanding of the basic philosophy underlying that answer. It is sufficient here to list the features that must be considered.

1. There must be provision for teaching the *basic elements of home-making.* It is not necessary, tho, to reproduce every room in a home. Certain of the home-making skills can be learned in the pupil's own home under the joint direction of the home and school or in some home that is used by the school for demonstration purposes.

2. Unless the community school is one that is attended by pupils whose parents have no interest in crops and livestock, as might be the case in a mining village in some high mountain canyon, basic accommodations for the *teaching of agriculture* comparable to those provided for home economics should be included. The more the community outside the school proper can conveniently furnish for training, the less specialized the school's facilities will have to be. The need for such facilities must not be carelessly brushed aside by board members or administrators, tho, with the superficial observation that Farmer X has a shop so the school doesn't need one. There must be a realistic complementing of school and community resources, keeping the *best* interests of both youth and adults in mind. Convenience and efficiency in teaching cannot be overlooked.

3. There must be an *auditorium and gymnasium or auditorium-gymnasium* for school and community use. This part of the plant should be as accessible to the adults in the community as to the pupils. The nature of community facilities available for public meetings outside the school will determine the size of auditorium that should be planned for.

4. There should be *a general shop or specialized shops* in which manual skills may be taught, and in which needed vocational skills for which community training facilities do not exist can be learned. A shop may be used, if necessary, for both agriculture and other shop teaching.

5. There should be *a library,* perhaps one used jointly by school and community; one or more *science laboratories, a health unit, administrative offices,* and *space for pupil conferences; two teachers' rooms,* the size depending on the number of teachers; *space for the commercial arts and for the academic subjects* that do not require laboratory work; *elementary classrooms,* if the building is to be planned for all twelve grades; *facilities for the fine arts;* and space for what have been considered *extracurriculum activities.*

6. Just as the city vocational school does not have in its own shops the intricate machines used in a near-by automobile body factory, even tho a considerable proportion of the boys who graduate go into that plant, so the rural school looks to the community for many specialized educational resources. That point of view has already been brought out by specific examples. It is stated as a principle here. There is, in the first place, marked economy in thus avoiding duplication of resources. In the second place, training for the student is more realistic, since, if he is a youth he is using facilities that will be available to him as an adult, and if he has already reached maturity he is learning to make better use of what he already has. In the third place, an individual is more likely to see opportunities for service and for earning a livelihood in his own community as he works in it. Lastly, there is greater community interest in education when community facilities are used since the number of individuals who participate and contribute is increased.

Only when readily accessible resources possessed by the community are known and the educational needs of pupils in the school and adults in the community have been canvassed, are local school authorities in a position to know just what equipment for vocational and avocational training the school itself should possess.

7. Unless already available elsewhere in the vicinity, there should be *a community room adjacent to the school library* and near the school kitchen so that it may be used as a reading room by adults and so refreshments may be served with a minimum of inconvenience. This room will be an attractive meeting place for civic groups for discussion, conference, and recreation. It should be made clear that it belongs to the community and is not merely loaned by the school for community use.

8. Since community betterment is the purpose of the school, the school may have a *hatchery, nursery and greenhouse, canning and drying unit, freezing unit, butchering facilities, and experimental plots.* These should not be operated in competition with private enterprise. For example, if someone in the community already has a hatchery, if it furnishes stock adequate in quantity and superior in quality, and if thru this hatchery facilities needed for the training of boys and girls are available, then the school has no reason to have a hatchery of its own.

9. The ground owned or leased by the school should be suitable and sufficient in area for the buildings to be placed on it, for *play* and other *physical activities,* for *landscaping,* and for such *agricultural projects* as the school conducts.

These nine statements are broadly phrased guides that will be of value to any individual, board, or committee that may be planning to undertake a study of the adequacy of the educational plant the community already possesses or the characteristics of the plant it should provide. Before that matter is discussed, tho, another problem must be considered:

PROBLEM 21. DOES THE SCHOOL PLANT SERVE A REAL COMMUNITY?

There are at least two reasons for raising this question. In the first place, if the attendance area served is too limited in scope, instruction is more costly than it need be since educational facilities are unnecessarily duplicated by adjoining school plants. In the second place, for a school plant to be effective educationally it must meet the needs of the entire community. This means just as surely serving boys and girls and men and women on the outer fringes as it does serving all rather than only a few of those who are within the immediate environs of the school. To state the case differently, a rural high school is only partially effective as a community agency if its program is planned for the town but ignores agricultural resources and problems as well as the human beings who live on the farms within the natural community area. A school is only partially effective, too, if it plans just for boys and girls and overlooks the needs of adults.

If it is found that a school does not serve the whole of the population of the community in which it is located, whether the neglect be for those living on the fringes or in the heart of the community, practical and realistic plans must be made for reaching all that should be affected by the school program before the design of the educational plant is drawn up. An enlargement of the school district itself may be the answer. There are times when a less formal joining of districts is advisable, perhaps contracting for instruction. If the problem is one of reaching not a larger area in square miles but rather a larger percent of the community, the adequacy of the educational program itself must be given consideration. Whatever the nature of the deficiency may be, the educational plant planned for the future must be designed to serve the whole of the community of which it is or should be a part.

PROBLEM 22. HOW LARGE SHOULD THE EDUCATIONAL PLANT BE?

The reader might judge from the material presented immediately after Problem 20 that the educational plant for a rural community must always be large and that the per pupil cost will be high. Neither presumption is correct. The size of the plant bears a direct ratio to the number of young people and adults to be served. Moreover, the number of rooms needed depends on the total of the class groups to be scheduled. A maximum of 90 percent efficiency in room use is possible in the small school as well as the large school. Equally important, it is not to be assumed that a small plant need be less effective educationally than a large one. That is a commonly held point of view that has grown out of our failure to plan small school plants with the same intelligence and care as is given to large city schools.

The smallest effective rural school will generally house all twelve grades. Barring the occasional availability elsewhere in the community of some of the facilities here enumerated, it will have room facilities for homemaking and agriculture adaptable for use by high-school youth and adults alike. The homemaking room will be so equipped that it may be used by other classes and the agriculture unit will have a general shop rather than one equipped for farm shop alone. There will be an auditorium-gymnasium, a combination science-classroom, a combination library-assembly-typing room (the typing section to be set off by a glazed partition), provision for art and music in regular classrooms or vice versa, and an office with a combination board and pupil-workroom adjoining. The grounds and adjoining buildings, the latter often inexpensive in construction, should be adequate for the purposes to be served.

It is apparent to the reader that in order to achieve economy in size, and hence in cost, stress has been placed on multiple use in designing the school plant for the small community. To obtain the fullest advantage from multiple use the most careful planning is required. It can truthfully be said that the smaller a building the greater the care with which its plans must be drawn. As a rule just the opposite policy has been followed.

Besides multiple use, provision must be made for multiple supervision.

A small school has more rooms than teachers and administrators. A large school doesn't. If the small school is to put all its rooms to fullest use, glazed or movable partitions must be employed to permit one instructor to work with two or more groups of pupils at a time. The writer once visited a small secondary school in Montana where by standing in the typing room he was able to observe a shorthand class directly ahead, pupils in a science laboratory to the right, a physical education group in the gymnasium to the left, and a history class behind. One teacher was not responsible for all these groups, except in an emergency, but two often were. In none of the rooms were there forty or more pupils as would commonly be the case in a city school. It was the smallness of the groups that made multiple supervision practical on so great a scale.

As the number using the educational plant becomes larger quite naturally less multiple use and less multiple supervision are necessary. These devices along with use of community resources are always available, tho, to be employed as needed in achieving economy in the planning of the school plant.

PROBLEM 23. CAN OUR PRESENT EDUCATIONAL PLANT BE MADE ADEQUATE?

This is a question that can be answered only with the help of an expert in school building construction. If the plant is too small as it stands it may or may not be feasible to add to it. In its present form it may appear to be entirely inadequate but a trained specialist may see possibilities of modifications not apparent to the layman.

Even the decision as to whether the structure is properly located is not one that can always be settled locally. A study of distances, population, density, suitability of play space, direction of travel, and traffic and other hazards can best be given proper weight by someone experienced along that line.

PROBLEM 24. HOW SHOULD THE PLANT NEEDS BE FINANCED?

It might appear that the answer may be obtained by simply finding out how much money is needed and floating long-term bonds for that amount. There are many school districts that are still struggling today to pay for a building that was financed in that way during or just after the First World War. Taxes already raised would have paid the original cost of the structure several times over, but there is still a heavy debt.

Many educational and governmental authorities favor assistance with school building construction as the one type of federal aid surest to circumvent federal control. Just as grants were given thru WPA and PWA in the 1930's, it may be in the years after the war that a certain percent of capital costs may be obtained from the federal government. There is much to be said for state aid, too. With a small levy a given state can raise enough each year to provide funds for school building construction in a number of communities. For the part of the cost thus supplied, no bonds and hence no interests costs are necessary. Already more than a half dozen states—Delaware, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont—give state aid for school buildings.[1] New York's policy is especially liberal for central rural school buildings, the state basing its aid upon the enrolment of the school and the wealth of the district. The success they have had with the plan shows that it is a feasible one and that it might well be adopted on a wider scale. The point made here is that federal and state aid for new school buildings and for modernization and repair constitutes a sound type of equalization. Full use should be made of these sources of funds and where the aid available is inadequate an effort should be made to obtain legislation that provides it.

In most cases, even with both federal and state aid, some of the funds needed will have to be raised locally and bonds may have to be floated. If that is necessary they should be refundable and if at all possible a financial plan should be set up for retiring them in ten years. Twenty- and thirty-year bonds are almost always a serious mistake. This suggestion does not mean that while the building is being paid for teachers' salaries are to remain low, and that the educational program is to be held to a bare minimum. There is little advantage in building an educational plant to provide facilities really needed by the community and then failing to furnish these facilities because the tax funds raised are being used to meet debt services.

The most useful educational plant for a rural community is likely to have several small structures near the main building to house such services as a cannery and dehydrating unit and perhaps the shop. These structures are relatively inexpensive, particularly if student labor is used in the building of them as it should be. For that reason they can often be paid for out of current revenue. Increasingly, we will look on the educational plant as something very flexible with additions and alterations to be made as the need arises. This is in marked contrast to the view that a community will build an educational structure only once in perhaps fifty or one hundred years and that in some way or somehow the educational program must adapt itself to that plant no matter how greatly needs change. Possibly the central unit of the plant should be permanent to this degree, but there should be many other facilities that yield readily to modification.

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[1] National Education Association, Research Division, "State School Financial Systems." Washington: *Research Bulletin* 20: 150-96; November 1942. p. 174.

Chapter 12

Using State and Federal Funds To Equalize Educational Opportunities in Rural Areas

THE PRESENT educational program in America is inadequate, both in amount and in quality. Millions of American children each generation live in communities where they have extremely meager educational opportunities. In many communities where the amount of education is adequate so far as the number of days the school operates is concerned, educational opportunities are extremely weak in several areas of experience or learning.

It is crystal clear that the potential assets of rural children and youth will not be developed adequately unless the work of the schools serving rural America is brought into harmony with the need in modern American life. The time has come when rural children must be given educational opportunities equivalent to those provided urban children. But this cannot be done generally either in the open country or in the villages and towns of rural America unless the financial support for the schools is equalized. Twenty-five percent of the nation's children aged five to thirteen live in economically submarginal rural areas commonly designated as problem-areas. In addition, rural America is carrying a disproportionate part of the educational load in terms of its economic ability because of the larger proportion of children living in rural areas as compared to the wealth there. With migration between rural and urban areas as it is, the welfare of the urban, like that of rural, areas depends to a considerable extent on the solution to this educational problem.

PROBLEM 25. WHAT IS EQUALIZATION OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES?

Two alternatives present themselves. On the one hand, the American people could leave the nature and scope of the educational opportunities afforded the children to the local school district. On the other hand, society could guarantee to every boy and girl the opportunity of a good education.

If this first alternative were followed completely, opportunities would vary between the widest possible extremes, even tho the state required local school districts to maintain schools. Regardless of the strong desires which parents in certain districts may have for the education of their children, many districts are too poor to offer more than the bare rudiments of modern education. It has been said that under such conditions the education which children receive would be determined chiefly by factors such as the action of some prehistoric glacier which happened to have moved down over the given area 10,000 years ago, scraping the rich soil off the land in certain districts and depositing it in others.

The second alternative brings us to the concept of equalization of educational opportunities. Equalization of educational opportunities has come to mean that all children, regardless of their place of residence, shall be guaranteed equal educational opportunity up to the level judged necessary for a society of free men, and that the cost of the equalized program shall be paid for out of public funds in such a way that all taxpayers carry an equal tax load so far as the cost of the program is concerned. Equalization of educational opportunity, therefore, means that each American child shall have an opportunity equal to all other children to develop his talents at least to the point required in American life today. It means that he shall have a chance to attend school for a sufficient number of days each year, that he shall have good teachers, an adequate school building and grounds, a sufficiently broad curriculum to offer him a rich educational experience, a modern program of guidance, adequate library and laboratory facilities, and transportation where it is needed. Equalization does not mean identical educational opportunities for all children. Rather, it means adequate opportunity according to the individual's own talents and the public needs of a free people. The newer concept of equalization of educational opportunity, therefore, means the erasing of the *financial handicap* standing in the way of adequate educational opportunities for all American children and youth everywhere.

Recent discussions of the concept of equalization of educational opportunities emphasize the need for financial aid to children and youth whose financial limitations are such as to present an undue handicap in their effort to get an education. This proposal is not a matter of charity. It is a matter of the general welfare. Adequate education for all is the best type of insurance against civic incompetency and individual inefficiency in our democratic way of life. It is not entirely adequate for an equalization program merely to make possible the facilities for adequate schooling for all. The need also exists for making it possible for all children and youth to avail themselves of the opportunity. Emphasis is placed on the need for a program of student aid thru scholarships or paid work opportunities for youth. For children, it has been recommended that financial aid be given thru family allowances administered by social service agencies.

PROBLEM 26. WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EQUALIZATION AND DEMOCRACY?

Dean Holmes recently said, "Equalization of educational opportunity in the United States is an issue so pressing, so momentous for our common life, that people ought to be gossiping about it on the street corners."[1]

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[1] Holmes, Henry W. "The Nation Challenges the Schools." *Atlantic Monthly* 165: 20-27; January 1940.

Paul V. McNutt said, "The forties, like every other decade, presents many pressing problems. For my part, I believe none is more vital than that of equalizing educational opportunity for American youth."[2]

Equalization of educational opportunity within itself is meaningless. It takes on meaning only when it is seen in relationship to the objective which it seeks to achieve. Those interested in grasping the relationship of equalization of educational opportunities to the objective it seeks to achieve should analyze the relationship between equalization and American democracy.

Documents, such as the Declaration of Independence and the Preamble to the Constitution, refer to factors commonly thought of as constituting the general welfare in a free country. It also has been said that the most fundamental characteristic of a democracy is the secret ballot. Equalization of educational opportunity rests on the belief that all men are created free and equal and that each should have adequate opportunity to prepare himself so he will be unhampered in his pursuit of happiness and in his exercise of the franchise. Equalization of educational opportunity, therefore, seeks to provide all American children a type of education that fits the needs of a nation of free men.

The principle involved in equalization of educational opportunity is fundamental in American life. It represents the embodiment of the real spirit of the American way. Thus, a full-fledged program of equalization of educational opportunity in America is the surest way to guarantee the preservation and enrichment of American life, both from the point of view of the general welfare and the individual's welfare.

PROBLEM 27. WHAT IS THE NEED FOR EQUALIZATION IN RURAL AREAS?

The need or the conditions which make equalization of educational opportunities desirable is a matter of record. The following are important items among those conditions.

A paradox seems to exist. In the richest country in the world, in a country of liberty, justice, and equality, in a country that contains humanity's hopes for human welfare and happiness, these conditions exist. Out of every one hundred Americans of adult age:

1. Four have had no formal schooling.
2. Ten have completed less than five years of schooling.
3. Forty-six have attended elementary school from five to eight years.
4. Thirty have attended high school at least one year.
5. Ten have attended college one year or more.

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[2] McNutt, Paul V. "We Face the Forties." *Nation's Schools* 25: 45-46; March 1940.

Two types of information closely related to the foregoing seem significant. They are:

1. Slightly more than 10,000,000 of the 77,575,728 adults twenty-five years of age and over are today functionally illiterate, that is, 13.5 percent of the adult population has less than fifth-grade education.
2. Four million children of school age today are not in school at all.

During perhaps the most representative school year since 1929, the year of 1935-36, or halfway between the depression of the 1930's and this war, the following conditions existed:

1. In over 30,000 school districts serving more than 3,000,000 children the school year was cut short by at least three months.
2. Two thousand four hundred school buildings were locked entirely.
3. More than five times that number would have been locked if teachers had demanded full payment of salaries.
4. One million four hundred thousand pupils sat daily in school buildings that were condemned as unsanitary or unsafe.
5. Another million children attended school in temporary quarters such as lodge halls, stores, churches, theaters, and tents.
6. An additional 500,000 attended school only a half day due to the lack of school buildings.

According to a recent issue of the *Biennial Survey of Education,* the average urban pupil in the United States has the advantage of a school term of 181.7 days while the average rural pupil attends a school which is in session only 167.6 days.[3] This information becomes more significant when it is recalled that there are more children five to seventeen years old in rural than in urban areas (15,041,289 as compared to 14,703,957), altho 52 percent of the children enrolled in the nation's schools are in urban areas. The *Biennial Survey* in summarizing the findings states that: "The urban-rural data as a whole, however, offer substantiation of the fact that rural children are seriously handicapped as compared with urban children in the educational opportunities available to them."[4]

Recent information indicates that the school districts within a certain state vary in their ability to support schools in the ratio of 400 to 1. This means that while one district in that state could raise only $1 for the support of its schools, another district in the same state could raise $400 at the same tax rate. The average variation in ability of the local school districts within the various forty-eight states probably is well above 100 to 1.

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[3] U. S. Office of Education, Federal Security Agency. "Statistical Summary of Education, 1939-40." *Biennial Survey of Education, 1938-40.* Vol. II, Chapter 1. Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, 1943.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

Spaulding, in a conference at Harvard University in 1941, emphasized the practical significance of this condition when he said, "Live where there is much taxable wealth and you have a chance to get good schools; live where there is little taxable wealth and you are out of luck."

Negro education in the open country and the villages of rural America, as a general rule, presents the worst picture in American education. Comparative data for a number of significant items for white and Negro schools are as follows:

1. The average length of term for white schools in the seventeen states that maintain dual school systems is 170.8 days with a range from 187.8 for Maryland to 157.1 for Alabama.
2. In those states, the average length of term for Negro schools is 156.3 days with a range from 186.7 for Maryland to 124.1 for Mississippi.
3. The number of pupils enrolled per member of the instruction staff in those seventeen states is 29.2 for white schools with a range from 33.7 for Arkansas to 25.6 for Delaware.
4. For Negro schools the average pupil enrolment per member of the instructional staff is 37.7 with a range from 45.7 in Mississippi to 27.2 in Kentucky.

Thirteen of the seventeen states which maintain dual school systems reported information concerning salaries of principals, supervisors, and teachers. The range for white schools was from $1715 for Delaware to $636 for Arkansas. The range for Negro schools was from $1500 for Delaware to $232 for Mississippi. Average salaries were not reported for the group of states.

The Research Department of the National Education Association in a bulletin just prior to the beginning of World War II compared the salaries of rural and urban teachers. The average rural teacher received an annual income of $967, while the average urban teacher received $1937 or practically twice that of the rural teacher. The Research Department also pointed out that the rural teacher would generally prefer to continue to teach in the rural schools if salaries there were the same as in city schools.[5]

Expenditures per pupil in rural schools are approximately 60 percent of that for urban children. In the vast majority of cases the rural school curriculum needs revision. Instruction is confined chiefly to the traditional three R's thru drill on textbook assignments, and library and laboratory facilities are poor or nonexistent.

The forty-eight states vary considerably in their relative ability to support schools out of their own state and local tax resources. Research has shown that:

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[5] National Education Association, Research Division, "The Rural Teacher's Economic Status." *Research Bulletin* 17: 4-59: January 1939.

1. If all states were to adopt the Model Tax Plan of state and local taxation and levy uniform tax rates that the states would vary in the ratio of more than six to one in ability to support schools.

2. The poorest state could spend *all* its state and local tax collections under the Model Tax Plan on its schools, thus leaving nothing for the support of other governmental services, and then not be able to provide the children with the *average* program of education now provided thruout the nation.

3. Thirteen states would have to spend a larger percentage of their state and local tax collections under the Model Tax Plan than any state actually does now spend on its schools in order to provide the average program for the nation.

4. As a general rule, the agricultural states rank lowest in relative ability to finance schools.

Research also has shown that the foregoing condition among the states is not due to the lack of effort on the part of states in which educational opportunities are lower than the national average. In fact, the poorest states generally put forth the most effort to support their schools in proportion to their ability.

PROBLEM 28. WHAT RELATIONSHIP IS THERE BETWEEN FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION?

The question of whether or not there is a relationship between the financial support of the schools and the nature and extent of the educational opportunities afforded children is a definitely practical problem in any discussion of equalizing educational opportunities. Unless there is a relationship, a discussion of equalization simply is a theoretical one without any practical implications. In fact, a considerable part of inadequate school support during the past has been due to a lack of understanding of the relationship between adequate support for the schools and the nature and quality of the educational opportunities afforded the children who attend school.

Four well-known educators have drawn the following conclusions on the basis of their experience, their observation, and their research on the points involved:

> The American ideal of equality of opportunity through education waits for its realization upon the solution of the problem of the financing of our schools. . . . There are, of course, many problems of teaching, of curriculum, and of administration which will contribute to the realization of our democratic idea. But most fundamental of all the conditions required is that of adequate support.[6]
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> Not only are the more economically favored schools operating unusually strong schools, but, in addition, they seem to be aware of changing conditions and their effect on the educational program. Constant study, experimentation

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[6] Strayer, George D. "Today's Problems in Financing Education." *Proceedings of the Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting.* National Association of Public Schools Business Officials, October 11-15, 1937. p. 115.

and improvement are being made. This group of schools is significantly dynamic in outlook and practice.[7]

Finance is the most powerful agency in any plan requiring money for its successful operation.[8]

Many of the weaknesses of the schools are fully explained by the saying that too little money has been available for the school to use.[9]

The efficiency of the schools is determined largely by the amount of the school revenue and the wisdom with which it is expended.[10]

A number of research studies are available concerning the relationship of the level of financial support afforded the schools and the quality of education afforded pupils. The most recent of these studies[11] involves a number of schools in the State of New York operating on each of three levels of support: average, lower cost schools, and the higher cost schools. The chief finding in the study of the experience of these schools is that the level of financial support afforded the schools makes a noticeable difference in the nature and quality of the work of school.

PROBLEM 29. WHAT ARE THE METHODS OF EQUALIZATION?

There are three levels of government in the United States. Hence, a comprehensive program of equalization of educational opportunities involves the federal government, the states, and local school districts. This statement assumes that county school support in those states in which the county participates in the financial support of the schools is considered as local support.

Two things need to be considered in planning an equalization program: (1) the size of the educational load to be carried in the schools within the area where equalization is to take place, and (2) the relative ability of the schools within that area to pay for the educational program out of their own tax resources.

There are a number of different measures of the size of the educational load. Perhaps the most frequently used one in current practice is average daily attendance. The most frequently used index or measure of taxpaying ability in state equalization programs is the tax levy or the millage required to support a given level of education in the school districts of average wealth. The equalization program provides for additional support for those school districts that cannot raise as much money thru their own local tax as is required to support the equalized program.

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[7] Moehlman, Arthur B. *School Administration.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1940. p. 76.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 450.

[9] Sears, Jesse B. *Stockton School Survey.* Vol. II. Stockton, Calif.: Board of Education. 1938. p. 8.

[10] Reeder, Ward G. *Fundamentals of Public School Administration.* New York: Macmillan Co., 1941. p. 353.

[11] Educational Conference Board of New York State. *What Education Our Money Buys.* Albany, New York: the Board, 1943. 32 p.

There are degrees of equalization. Complete equalization is achieved when all districts are able to provide the full equalization program. Complete equalization of educational opportunities within a given state means that the state, thru state aid to the local school districts, provides sufficient money to enable all districts to carry on at least the equalization program. Thus, school support would be drawn in a balanced way from both state and local tax resources, and all children in the state would be guaranteed adequate educational opportunities so far as the state was able economically to finance its schools.

At least thirty-eight states distribute state aid to local school districts according to some plan of equalization. Additional states distribute funds in such a way that a degree of equalization is involved indirectly. State equalization plans vary considerably. A brief discussion of two reasonably successful equalization plans is presented here by way of illustration.

The New York State plan contains the following provisions:

1. Fifteen hundred dollars is allowed for each elementary-school teaching unit and $1900 for each high-school, part-time, or continuation-school teaching unit.

2. From the foregoing allowance, there is deducted for each school district an amount equal to the local tax collections on a six-tenths of a mill levy on the actual valuation.

3. The basis for determining teaching units is slightly different for the elementary and the high school. In the elementary school, the one-teacher school is one unit; schools enrolling 135 pupils or less are allowed two teaching units for the first forty pupils and one additional unit for each additional thirty-two pupils. Schools enrolling more than 135 pupils are allowed one teaching unit for each twenty-seven pupils in average daily attendance.

4. A district may not receive a larger sum in state aid than the amount of the excess of the total expenditure for school purposes above the aggregate of the amount which would result from a tax of five mills on the actual valuation of the taxable property and the other public money apportioned to the district.

The Maryland plan has the following main provisions:

1. The state works out a minimum salary schedule for a given number of principals and teachers.

2. Legal provisions require that not less than 24 percent of the school budget, excluding transportation, debt service, and capital outlay, shall be spent for purposes other than teachers' salaries. Thus, 76 percent of the budget excluding transportation, debt service, and capital outlay, is calculated. To that amount is added the total cost of transportation, debt service, and capital outlay. This latter total constitutes the accepted minimum program for the current operation of the schools.

3. The state allocates to each county (Maryland has the county unit plan) equalization funds sufficient to equal the difference between the cost of the minimum program and a 5.1 mill local tax levy plus all other state aid not considered as equalization aid.

If all of the forty-eight states were to equalize educational opportunities fully or completely within their respective borders, as indicated in the previous paragraph, equalization of educational opportunities for the children thruout the nation would be far from an actual realization. The federal government has a responsibility for the financial support of the schools.

If the federal government equalized educational opportunities among the forty-eight states, which is necessary in a complete equalization program, it would distribute to the states enough money to equalize educational opportunities up to the national equalization level. Funds would be distributed on the basis of the educational need in the states as measured by some index, such as average daily attendance and the relative ability of the states to support their schools out of their own state and local tax resources.

PROBLEM 30. ARE STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDS FOR BUILDINGS NECESSARY?

The school plant (building and grounds) has a more significant relation to an educational program than generally realized. Hundreds of communities thruout the nation are attempting to carry on a program of education in school buildings that are unsafe, unsanitary, and unappealing in their general appearance. The majority of school buildings thruout the nation are located on school grounds that are far too small to meet the need in modern education, poorly planned, and with very little landscaping. Yet, in those same buildings teachers generally accept as objectives of the school the development of good health and health habits, safety education, and an appreciation of beauty. The contradiction is almost self-evident. Schoolwork cannot be done well in a building that is a fire hazard or dilapidated; or a building that has little appeal to the imagination of pupils, teachers, and citizens of the community.

As pointed out in Problem No. 26, these facts indicate the inadequate school building situation which exists at the present time:

1. One million four hundred thousand pupils attend school in buildings condemned as unsanitary or unsafe.
2. Another million children attend school in temporary quarters such as lodge halls, stores, churches, theaters, and tents.
3. An additional 500,000 attend school only a half day due to the lack of school buildings.

The information which follows throws additional light on the school building problem.

1. The total school debt in the nation as a whole is more than $3,000,000,000, or almost twice the annual cost for the current expense of the schools.
2. Reliable estimates are that America now needs at least $500,000,000 annually to bring school building conditions up to a reasonably adequate level.

For a number of years during the postwar period a larger amount than that should be spent in order to take up the lag in school building construction.

An adequate program of financial support for school building construction will do two things: (1) finance the program adequately and economically; and (2) provide funds for every school district at the time those funds are needed. The traditional plan for financing school building construction is for the local school district to pay the total cost. This usually is done thru a bond issue in which the maturity date is spread over a quarter of a century. Complete information is not available to show the extent of refinancing or renewing of such bonds. It is commonly recognized by students of this subject that many school bonds are renewed for an additional period of years. The net result of this whole plan is that interest on school bonds for building purposes generally exceeds the total cost of the building. Certainly, a better plan should be worked out.

The voters in most school districts will not approve a bond issue except in prosperous times. Thus, school building construction goes forward at a very uneven pace. This violates the principle that funds for school building construction should be available at the time the funds are needed.

Complete local support of school building construction means that property owners carry the total burden since the property tax is the only major tax that can be levied and collected efficiently by local officials. The use of state and federal funds means spreading the burden of cost justly and fairly to the shoulders of all taxpayers.

Seven states give state aid for school building construction. This shows that state aid for capital outlay can be administered effectively. Other states should see the merits of the plan and solve the inadequacies of the school building conditions.

PROBLEM 31. DOES EQUALIZATION TAKE FROM THE RICH TO AID THE POOR?

Those familiar with the history of school finance will readily recognize that the question of whether or not equalization means taking money away from the wealthier schools and giving it to the poorer schools is a question frequently encountered in both lay and professional circles. In fact, that question has at one time or another in a number of states split into factions those who favor good schools and adequate school support. In this way, a lack of understanding of what actually happens in an equalization program has been a definite stumbling block to progress.

If equalization of educational opportunity in final analysis means taking money away from the wealthier districts and giving it to the poorer schools, then equalization simply raises the level of support for the schools in certain districts but lowers it proportionately in other districts. The net result of that plan would be merely the shifting of some of the educational opportunities from children in certain schools to those in other schools, something of a leveling-off process in which the high spots are removed and the low points filled in. Under this trend of thought, a program, if pushed to complete equalization, would have all schools operating on the same level, because if we continue to take more and more funds away from the wealthier districts and give them to the poorer schools, the point eventually would come where the support afforded all schools would be the same.

In the second place, it could be possible that a program of equalization actually does not take any educational opportunity from any child and, at the same time, definitely increases the opportunities of children in the poorer districts. In fact, this is the case in an acceptable equalization program.

The only major tax that can be successfully levied and collected by local taxing units is the property tax. For that reason, the property tax is left solely or chiefly for the support of local government in a number of states. The state then relies on a number of taxes which it can administer successfully, such as the personal income tax and the general business tax; or a series of business taxes, luxury taxes of various kinds, and the sales tax. State funds for education or for any other purpose then come from revenue collected from those taxes. Thus, local school support comes from the local property tax and state aid from other levies, usually other taxes.

Under the foregoing condition, equalization does not take funds from any school to give them to another school. Rather, equalization actually spreads the load of support more evenly on the shoulders of all taxpayers in the state, thus placing school support on a broader and stronger tax base. This is one of the major benefits of equalization.

PROBLEM 32. DOES FEDERAL AID BRING FEDERAL CONTROL?

Fear of federal control over the schools is today the major stumbling block to federal aid for education, and hence to the use of federal funds to equalize educational opportunities among the states. The vast majority of the American people—laymen, Congressmen, and educators—do not want to give up the traditional policy of state and local control over the schools. The control of education today, as well as during the past, rests chiefly and directly in the hands of the parents in the local school district.

Until the question of federal control of the schools is properly analyzed and answered by the American people to such an extent that they feel that they have their feet firmly on solid ground in that respect, equalization of educational opportunities for millions of American children each generation will be at best only a dream for the future. The people refuse to risk losing direct control over the schools. No other question in the equalization of educational opportunities is as important as a clear under-

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standing of the separation of federal aid and federal control of education.

According to one point of view, federal control of education will invariably go with a federal equalization program, or any type of federal aid for education. Those who hold that point of view propose two arguments: (1) "He who pays the fiddler will call the tune." (2) Since the federal government exercises control over the Smith-Hughes Act and similar educational aid, it should or would do likewise over the educational program if aided.

According to another point of view, federal control does not necessarily follow federal aid, in fact, does not need to follow unless the provisions giving control actually are written into the legislation granting the aid. During the longest period of our national life, the federal government gave funds for the general support of the schools without exercising any form of control over the schools. Support was given without any strings being tied.

Research has indicated that if federal funds be given to the states for the support of the schools according to a mathematical formula based on the educational needs and the relative tax raising ability of the respective states, federal control over education would be automatically prevented.

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